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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

MR. BRIGHT has been so much alone, throughout, in the Reform Agitation, that when he is not making speeches, the Agitation itself stands still. The Government, of course, keeps its own secret, like all governments, but we cannot help asking, where are the Whigs? Now, one would think, was their time, if they were the earnest reformers which they profess to be. Are they waiting till all the work is done, in hopes of reaping the fruit of the work? Or are they trembling for their boroughs, and intent only on saving them? We cannot guess; but the fact is significant, and we recommend it to the careful attention of the lovers of consistency throughout the kingdom.

Meanwhile, it is no easy matter to discuss a question on which everybody declines to tell us his intentions. Mr. Bright has certainly not made up his mind, or if he has, we have not yet seen the result. The collateral questions he raises—such as why one man should have an immense estate? and so forth—only spoil the main question, which is, how the Constitution can be practically improved in the present day? The collateral are social questions—very interesting, no doubt, and very proper for discussion, if the inquiry be whether we ought to have a revolution or no? But, as we take it, the present subject is the reform of the House of Commons without any destruction of property. So that we have little to do with the accumulation of land through marriages (the real sources of the big estates); and which accumulation is practised by all families, new or old, commercial or non-commercial, in obedience to an instinct thoroughly British, and found in poor as well as rich. Neither has the question of aristocracy much to do with the present Reform, further than this, that where anybody (peer or not) is over-represented—as by a borough where he returns a member “on his own hook”—he ought to be and will be docked. But the general existence of aristocracy is accepted by England as a fact. It mainly depends on inequality of property, which produces inequality of influence by a law that nothing can shake.

A poor duke is nearly as insignificant as his neighbour, now-a-days; to abolish titles would only change names, not power. In short, we do not see what the discussion has to do with the matter; especially since nobody pretends that the property of the country ought to be confiscated, or that, if it was, it would be more respectably used in new hands than it is in the present ones. The worst, too, of carrying political controversy up to this point, is, that it frightens the “respectable” and disgusts the intellectual classes; and that, in the consequent panic or apathy, all chance of a real practical reform grows weaker.

We suspect that there will be no possibility of a good discussion of the Reform question till Parliament meets. Then the House of Commons and the country will know what they are to expect, and men will go where the best fare is provided for them. It is useless to calculate “party” strength. There are Tories who will vote against ministers instantly, if their bill frightens them. There are Radicals who will vote for them cheerfully, if they give enough, and who will not be very greedy either. In such circumstances, what can one do but wait? having indicated (as we have often done) the principles we wish to see a bill based upon. “Wait,” accordingly, is the word everywhere now; and indeed, the political atmosphere at present is as chilly, raw, and ungenial as the physical one.

From abroad—chiefly from Italy—come whispers of future storm. There are absolutely many people who rank the agitation now prevailing in some parts of the south with that which heralded 1848. If Louis Napoleon does take the awful step of countenancing Piedmont and joining her against Austria, we may prepare for a war in Europe such as has not been seen since the great one which closed in 1815. Our impulse in England would be to sympathise with those who strike for liberty, but to begin such a crusade under the banner of Louis Napoleon would be wild indeed. If we did, and were unsuccessful, of course we should share the failure; but, if we succeeded, what have we to gain by vastly increasing the power of France?

It is mere credulity to suppose that France has any sentimental regard for the liberty of other nations, or that she would not take care to be well paid in power and territory for anything she undertook in Italy or elsewhere. All these alarms may blow over, like the other bottles of smoke always evaporating in Europe. But, at all events, let us keep from any complicity in the matter. When the last great Italian-Austrian difficulty was brewing, the Whig ministers and diplomatists deluded the people into believing that Great Britain would take up the cudgels for them, which, of course, Great Britain never did. The plain truth is, that we have enough to do at home, and that, if we would be philanthropic, we might as well, at least, begin with our own colonies. In case of the “difficulty” really looming large, our duty is plain. An increased naval force would be necessary to watch the business with, and we ought not to move an inch till we were fairly dragged into the struggle. Perhaps, however, it will appear that Austria is better able to take care of herself than is sometimes thought.

Mr. Gladstone's Ionian mission will, at least, do this good, and no unimportant good either—it will take away from those noisy islanders all pretence of being really an injured people in the eyes of Europe. When a man of the first private character and the first public consequence has been solemnly deputed to ask them their grievances, and they can only say that they have no grievance, no real injury to complain of; that what they want is a new adjustment of the political map of the Mediterranean, not to heal their wounds, but only to gratify their vanity, why, then, the testimony is worth having in favour of British government. For this reason, we do not regret Mr. Gladstone's mission, and are glad that he has told the people frankly how the case stands. Ages ago, the inhabitants of the Greek islands (“Greek” or not, and certainly not pure Greek) proved themselves unfit for self-government or for any government but that of a good strong-handed foreigner, and, by a natural law, they got what they were fit for. It is the case with many a people,



THE FIELD LANE REFUGE.

and all the sentimentality in the world will never mend the matter. But the Lorraines have been marvellously lucky, luckier far than the land or Pole. They have a degree of freedom, politeness, which would be hailed as a blessing by some of the greatest nations in Europe. This, however, is not enough for *Greculus Esuriens*, whose appetite is tremendous and aspires to a new Hellenic empire. Well, we must do our duty. We must stick to the charge committed to us, by force, if necessary, and perform it honestly but more stringently. Any practical amelioration you please, and "liberty" in proportion to your good behaviour; that is the dictum of England for the future, gentlemen!

The last American mail brings another hint of anger in the Central American region. We hear of a vessel, or vessels, sailing for that quarter in hopes of bringing matters to a point with British cruisers. Of late years, the Americans have talked so big on a hundred occasions, that when they now cry "wolf," people are hardly disposed to look up. Yet it is evident that some day it may be necessary to determine how far we are to yield to them on every point in which the nations come in contact. We are not inclined to stickle much for position in Central America, however, and at the bottom of all that bluster of the Yankees, there is a queer good-nature and a secret fear of John Bull's opinion which inclines us to pardon a good deal. Of course, we must expect a squabble or two, as the presidential election draws on, and the long ear of the common elector requires tickling.

The Irish "arrests" seem to continue, and form a curious commentary on all we used to hear about the new and improved condition of that country. But this is, after all, perhaps the last kick of the old rebelliousness, the final fling of felonious system of many ages. It excites no fear here, nothing but disgust; and the hope that Lord Eglintoun may succeed in preparing the way for that more extensive colonisation of Ireland which seems the only thing likely to civilise it.

THE FIELD LANE REFUGE FOR THE DESTITUTE

OUR artist had already visited the Refuge for the Destitute in Field Lane, when a writer in the "Times" called attention to the scenes there presented. To the pencil-picture of the one, we add the pen-picture of the other:

There are some among our many readers whose professional duties demand that they should be out late at night, and who will require no aid of ours to recall to mind the crouching forms that sleep in doorways, under dry arches, or in niches on a bridge. At that hour of night the time is past for impostors or beggars, and the outcasts who he about, gathering for warmth into groups of two and three as autumn wanes and the night winds grow chill, are a peculiar class, who seldom beg and not more often steal. Many must have noticed how these people gradually vanish in winter, though not entirely so, for even on the rawest nights small groups of two or three may still be met, groups whose abject misery softens even the police, and they let them slumber on doorways unmolested. These are members of, alas! too large a class, known as the homeless poor; and let those who wish to see both how they live and how they suffer, pass but one hour at the refuge for the destitute in Field Lane. A very short visit will suffice even for those who most uphold our union system, and deny that very abject wretchedness can exist which our workhouses are not adequate to relieve. The way to it lies amid foul and noisy streets, where small and crazy tenements are crowded with many families, and where, amid even the scanty refuse which such a neighbourhood can afford to throw away, are groups of ragged infants, scarcely distinguishable save by their movements from the heap in which they search either for food itself or such small rubbish as rag-dealers will give them bread for. In such a vicinity, and close to the spot where Jonathan Wild's house once stood, is a large and cleanly whitewashed building, with lights inside, which at once distinguish it from the surrounding houses, where only rarely and at intervals is the dim reflection of a candle to be seen through the cracked and papered panes. You have no need to be told that this one clean building among many is the "refuge," for long ere night has fallen the wretched claimants for its shelter have begun to assemble, and watch the door with that steady earnestness which only belongs to those who have no hope beyond its charity. As the dusk deepens, they slink in from streets and byways, old men of 60 and 70, young boys—ay, and even children, but all alike in misery—faint, wet, and weary. They sit upon the slopy ground in silence more impressive than the loudest complaints; or, if they speak at all, it is in whispers, for want and suffering have quailed their spirits, and they move with an abject deference painful to see from the paths of the very few who pass that way. Gradually more and more drop in until the group is increased to 100 or thereabouts, and then the silence gets broken at last with hacking coughs from tall, meagre spectres, apparently in the last stage of decline, down to mere childrens' hoarse with inflammation of the lungs, or paining the ear with their close suffocating whooping-cough. Here are trampers, brick-makers, and labourers who have had no work since summer; some who have just come out of hospital, and are too feeble to labour; old men and little boys, street sweepers and orphans in every grade of misery and loneliness. These are some, and only some, of London's homeless poor—the men and boys without a friend or place to lay their heads in all this vast metropolis—the Bedouins of England, who live no man cares how or where—who struggle through some years of bitter want and maybe crime, till they creep into a hole to die, and after lying in the parish dead-house a few days, with a placard on their breasts marked with the touching word "Unknown," are given to the surgeons, and there's an end.

As soon as a moderate number have collected, the doors of the refuge are opened to its wretched tenants, and so remain open until the little cribs are filled with their full number of 300 outcasts, when the place is closed on all the many houseless applicants who come too late. The wants of grown men, though they feel cold and hunger like the rest, are apparently less severe than those which fall on little children, by whom, alas! nearly half the refuge is occupied. Take the first who present themselves, and let them tell their own tale. Here come four meagre little forms; they are mere children, all under the age of fourteen, all orphans, destitute, and living upon the streets, without a home or friend in the wide world. One has a pair of tattered canvas trousers and the remains of a grown man's fustian jacket hanging about his little limbs. Dirt and sores disfigure his body, his eyes are swollen, his face is puffed and fevered-looking; for, though spokesman of the party, he can scarcely draw his breath from inflammation of the lungs. They started two days since to see if they could gather holly to sell at Christmas. They wandered through Tottenham, and thence on to Hornsey and Epping Forest, a lady giving them a penny by the way, with which they bought some bread and shared it equally. They "couldn't git no holly," so they slept in a field, under a hedge, tramped back to London, and came to the Refuge, but it was full and closed, when one of the four went searching about the streets for food, while the three other children slept in a doorway on Saffron Hill. Two of these four have newly been left orphans and destitute, but two have been upon the streets some time, the little spokesman having shifted for himself four years, carrying parcels, holding horses, minding vegetables in Covent Garden, or watching butcher's meat when left out in the summer nights to cool, but never stealing.

By and by some little crossing-sweepers come in, eight in all—all children—all orphans—all destitute for years. One has earned 2d., which he has spent in a pennyworth of bread and a basin of coffee, keeping a halfpenny for some bread next day. Another, a singularly handsome boy, also a crossing-sweeper, has lately walked up from Bristol, living on blackberries and "swedes" by the way, and getting

a 1/4d. a week now and then at carpet-pulling. His mother, the only relative he ever knew, died four years since of cancer in the foot, and he himself has a similar disease forming, and now walks lame. He has been to an hospital about his foot, which pains him much, where they told him to rest it, keep it warm, and poultice it every night. Good advice this to a destitute child, sweeping crossings, and without food enough to live on! Another squallid, miserable child comes in, and his tale is so peculiar that we cannot refrain from giving it. His father and mother are alive, and he is one of a family of twelve children. His eldest brothers are nearly always in prison, "for they do handkerchiefs"—i.e., steal them—getting 2d. each for them, or 3d. for very good ones. His eldest sister, now only fifteen, a thief in her infancy, has been much in prison, and is now in a reformatory. The father and mother and the rest of the children live in this peculiar way:—The whole family rise at two in the morning, and, quitting the wretched cell in which they dwell, issue forth about the thoroughfares to tear down the posters and bills from palings and dead walls. Thus employed until daylight, the united exertions of the whole family in winter can collect a half-hundredweight of paper, for the sale of which they get 7d. But it is only during the long nights that even this pittance can be earned—in summer the father gets a little work, and the family scatter and shift in the fields, each as they can, for themselves.

It is useless, however, multiplying these painful instances. Let us pass to the female refuge. It is part of the same charitable institution, though for obvious reasons not near where the outcast males are harboured for the night. It is in another part of Field Lane, about half a mile distant, towards Saffron Hill, where all the Italian organ grinders receive a wretched shelter from their masters, and where want and loathsome misery, of course, abound. The refuge here is in a little yard off a narrow street, where a door near a coach house admits the visitor up a steep flight of wooden steps to a very cleanly whitewashed and well-lighted room or loft, some forty feet long by twenty feet wide and high, along each side of which are five-and-twenty little cots, ranged on the floor. A difference is very properly made between the treatment of the men and that of the women—the latter, instead of lying on the boards, have each a straw-stuffed mattress and extra rug, while, through the benevolent ministry of some kind ladies, a large cup of hot coffee is given to them with the Soz. loaf provided by the refuge at night and morning. For obvious reasons, too, it opens to receive its hapless victims as soon as darkness falls. At seven, therefore, they are mostly all assembled and sit, women and children, in two long rows drying their wretched garments near the stove; so worn and famished-looking that it wrings the heart to see them crouching moodily together with the silence of exhaustion and despair upon them all. At the first glance they seem to be all women of a middle age, but this is only the effect of care and hardship on their young frames, for a majority of them are under twenty, while but too many are mere children. Others come in by and by in twos and threes, walking heavily and slowly, with their worn dresses—too light and cool for summer wear—barely covering their poor thin forms. The last comers have been working at the shop-houses, where, by incessant labour from eight in the morning till eight at night, they can earn 2d. per day, finding their own cotton, needles, and tapes, and paying each 1d. a-week *for the use of the room they work in*. Let us take the case of the girl who last came in. She is sixteen, though she looks thirty; she has been a servant in two places, and had a good character from both, when she left the last to go into hospital for a long illness. When she came out she could get no place; she pawned her clothes, endured starvation more or less severe for many weeks, till she had to apply for relief and went the round of the casual wards of the Unions. She applied, she says, for admittance into Whitechapel Union, and was taken before the Board of Guardians, who told her the house was full, and they could "do nothing for her," so she went away and wandered in the streets another day and night, and next morning went to a magistrate, who told her her case was a hard one, but he could "do nothing for her." If she had but given one pert answer to any of those functionaries, miscalled relieving officers, the magistrate, whoever he was, would at once "have done something for him," and the girl would have gained a shelter even though in a prison. One person is there—a lady in manners and education, the daughter of an officer in the navy—who speaks French, understands German, and can teach music, and in whose face, worn and meagre as it is, can be discerned the traces of what once was beauty. Very little is known of her.

But it is needless to recapitulate such sad tales, from hearing the accumulated miseries of which our readers would shrink with heartfelt pain. Let us return once more to the men's refuge. It is past nine now, and all the rows of cribs are filled with occupants, and those who come too late—and there are always some forty or fifty such—must sleep in the streets, as those within the refuge now have done many hundred times before. Among the 300 occupants not a word is heard—each has washed and sat down in his crib, and each receives, with grateful thanks, an Soz. loaf, which is eaten almost before the man has done his work of distribution. Prayers are read, in which all join. Then each takes off his tattered clothes, though how they get them off, or, still more, how they are to get them on again, is almost a mystery—and, spreading them beneath them on the boards, cower under their rugs and go quietly to sleep. A watcher always remains up, though there is no need of him—there is seldom a movement among the poor thin forms around; worn out with hunger and fatigue they sleep on as if the world had no cares for them, or the next day did not dawn on the same life of loneliness and misery as that which has just gone by.

Such is a plain, and, in truth, a brief, account of our homeless poor, and such is refuge for the destitute.

KIDNAPPING IN NEW YORK.—A coloured boy, named Simpson, was induced to ship for Liverpool, in New York, but his mother suspected something wrong, and got the assistance of the police, who found the boy in a vessel, not bound for Liverpool, but for Mobile. The crew was found to be wholly composed of coloured boys, none of whom had free papers. The sergeant of the harbour police says that he has frequently known ships to sail for Southern ports with coloured crews, and has noted it as a remarkable fact that none of the crews ever came back.—*New York Paper*.

THE AMERICAN SHIPPING INTEREST.—It is seldom that our shipping interest is subjected to severer trials than at present. To say nothing of our transatlantic steamers, which are decidedly hors de combat, some of our old European packet lines are almost broken up—temporarily, perhaps—the ships having been sent down South for employment in cotton freights, rather than sail empty on their accustomed routes, or remain idle in the docks. Probably there are twenty ships ordinarily classed as Liverpool packets, now engaged in the Southern trade, and some others have been taken from the London lines. Such events are of rare occurrence. Some shipowners attribute the fact, in a great measure, to the running of so many ocean steamers, by which freights are diverted. Comparatively little effort is now made to keep up the old lines of packets to their full number of ships. It would be difficult to say when our shipping merchants will resort to steam, in the competition to which this kind of craft is subjecting them. As yet, we have no proper facilities for building iron steamers, now so much in favour abroad; and if we had, it is doubtful whether many would hazard their resources in constructing them, after the unfortunate experience in ocean steam navigation already had—at least, until more reliance can be placed upon the carriage of the mails, as a source of revenue. The proposition of J. Hostor Smith to import iron steamers free of duty, if successful, would remove impediments to enterprise encountered by some; for the extreme depression in steamship property which now prevails in Europe, (ships selling at something like half their original cost,) affords strong inducements to purchasers, particularly for the United States' coasting trade. But Mr. Smith's plan stands a poor chance of success, in opposition to domestic interests liable to be affected thereby. The most simple and natural explanation for this anomalous condition of things is, that commercial stagnation occurring in conjunction with the discharge from service of a vast number of transports employed in European wars, has caused an excessive glut of shipping, which must be reduced by disaster or decay, (or business sensibly revive,) before the mercantile marine will be restored to its normal state. Meanwhile, foreign steamers will obtrude themselves wherever there is a probability of paying expenses, and for a time absorb freights which would be refused if better business offered. With these supernumerary steamers, "half a loaf is better than no bread."—*New York Journal of Commerce*.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

THE Emperor of the French has set all Europe in commotion by a few words addressed to the Austrian Minister, M. Hubner, on New Year's-day. The Emperor said,—

"I regret that our relations with your Government are not so good as they were, but I request you to tell the Emperor that my personal feelings for him have not changed."

These few words are said to have been spoken "with a much more emphatic tone of voice and animated gesture than the Emperor generally employs, and reminded some of the listeners of a scene between the First Consul and the English Ambassador of that day, previous to the rupture of the Treaty of Amiens."

The first effect of this little outbreak was a considerable fall on the Paris Bourse, followed by a decline on our own Stock Exchange of a quarter per cent.

The fact is that France and Austria have for some time been at variance on "the Italian question," which has now reached a crisis. Whether this crisis has been in any way hastened by the French Emperor for the purposes of his own ambition may be uncertain, but that it has arrived there is no doubt. On both sides there is an expectation that the ensuing spring will bring forth some important event. In France it is whispered that the Emperor will not be sorry to divert public attention by appearing as the champion of Italy against his uncle's old foes. In the Piedmontese territory the greatest excitement prevails. Persons high in authority seem not to have scrupled to encourage the cry of the people for an Austrian war, to show their sympathy with the Lombardo-Venetians, and to give out that France on the one side, and Russia on the other, would shortly unite to deprive the House of Hapsburg of its Italian provinces. In the meantime, the inhabitants of Lombardy show their dislike of Austria by public demonstrations and private slights; and all Italy talks of the day of vengeance which draws nigh.

The French Emperor, seeing these things, and being, as some say, in no small degree the cause of them, has now interferred actively. He has asked Austria to join him in inducing the Pope to make reforms and improve the condition of his unhappy subjects. This scheme, though it apparently in no way affects the Austrian province, seems to have been viewed by the Viennese Cabinet in a jealous spirit, as the beginning of a course of interference in Italy. Austria has never recognised France as an Italian Power, and even now looks angrily at the occupation of Rome. Vienna has, therefore, refused to join in any alliance of reform with Napoleon in Italy. This decision was the cause of the outbreak of New Year's-day, which has created such uneasiness throughout Europe. At the first glance every man must be disposed to condemn Austria. The Papal Government is a crying evil; and the desire of Napoleon III. to use his vast influence in favour of the common rights of humanity must receive the due tribute of praise. But the rejection of his offers by Austria, is no doubt the result of a feeling that the French Emperor's co-operation would not be sincere and friendly. Rome, it is probably argued, is only a blind, and the manner in which the French Government has allowed the Piedmontese and the disaffected Lombards to invoke its assistance, shows that Austria cannot count on its good-will in Italian affairs generally.

The Emperor has granted a full pardon or commutation of sentence to one hundred and sixty-four persons who had been convicted at the sessions or by the ordinary tribunals, two of whom had been condemned to death. It is to be remarked that these are not political offenders.

The rumours of troubles in Algeria from the recently-vanquished Kabyles have acquired strength. The fact that the Paris papers are silent is held to be ominous.

SPAIN.

THE Spanish Government has declared that it was never the intention of Spain to sell Cuba, and protest against the insulting hypothesis to the contrary implied in the American President's Message. This declaration has been cordially approved by the Cortes.

Mexico has yielded to the demands of Spain; and the hatchet is again buried by these nations.

PRUSSIA.

AMONG the proposals to be laid before the Prussian Diet will be one relating to the army and navy; it is pretty certain that a considerable additional outlay in both these departments is contemplated. The attempt will now be made in earnest to create a fleet in the Baltic. The alteration in the army, it is supposed, will consist in placing the Landwehr on a permanent footing, and incorporating it into the Line, so that each infantry regiment will contain double the number of companies—24 instead of 12.

ITALY.

THE news from Italy is of a most alarming character. At Milan there is a constant and open display of hatred to the Austrian rule, and to all things Austrian, which only finds short of actual insurrection. Imperial cigars are all tabooed, and the dresses of ladies who are known to be well-inclined to the Austrian Government are every now and then besprinkled with sulphuric acid. At Pavia, persons who have smoked Austrian cigars in the streets have been assaulted and wounded, and a few days ago a petard exploded in front of the house of the delegate. Disturbances took place on the 27th at Modena; they were directed against the lottery, because the lottery is one of the sources of the public revenue. On the 2nd, the Duke of Modena left for Vienna, it is not said on what errand. Proclamations are secretly circulated, enjoining every one to avoid public amusements during the approaching carnival; and a novel form of shibboleth, or patriotic pass-word, is now heard in the streets—"Viva Verdi!" not that the *maestro* is the object of popular enthusiasm, but his name happens to give the initials, or anagram, of "Vittore Emanuele Rè D'Italia." Medals bearing this inscription are in full currency, and printed slips are scattered broadcast, with the same ominous words, in every town on both sides of Appenine. A sort of council of war has been held at Venice, for the discussion of the measures proper to be taken in certain eventualities.

Russia asked permission of Naples to erect a coaling station at Bridisi, on the entrance of the Adriatic. The King of Naples is said to have flatly refused the request, on the ground that Russia is in friendship with Piedmont. His Majesty can, according to this, not understand how anybody can be his friend and the friend of Victor Emmanuel at the same time.

TURKEY AND THE EAST.

THE "Ministerial crisis" seems to continue at Constantinople, and violent scenes are said to have taken place in the Council.

The last advices which reached Constantinople from Candia are more favourable.

The electors in Moldavia have been nominated; they are all Conservatives with the exception of four. Prince Michael Stourza has chances which render his election as Hospodar almost certain.

AMERICA.

THE proceedings in Congress had been of no special importance. In the Senate the Pacific Railroad Bill had been the principal topic. The debate turned upon a motion that the iron to be used in the construction of the road be of American manufacture. This proposition was pretty freely discussed, and was finally adopted by a vote of 25 yeas to 23 nays.

Two members of Congress, English of Indiana and Montgomery of Pennsylvania, encountered in a public avenue at Washington on the 18th, and quarrelled. English used a cane, and Montgomery retaliated with a bribe, after which they separated.

A Mobile telegram says:—"It is stated here, on the best authority, that the schooner *Susan* sailed for Nicaragua with the firm determination on the part of the leaders of the expedition not to allow the British navy or other foreign Power to stop them without resisting until blood was drawn."

The Odeon theatre, situated in the Bowery, New York, had been entirely destroyed by fire.

AUSTRALIA.

The principal intelligence from Sydney relates to the excitement caused by the reported discovery of gold on the Fitzroy river, and the result. It seems a man found some gold; the labourers from Port Curtis were the first in the field; rumour magnified the discovery, and Sydney was thrown into a ferment. Nor was the fever confined to Sydney. The Victoria diggers caught the infection, and rushed off in hundreds. The route to the Fitzroy gold-field was by water nearly all the way, and upwards of 6,000 persons soon congregated on the spot. They were doomed to disappointment. The field proved to be unproductive; the country was a desert, depending for supplies from importations. What could be done? Every steamer and sailing vessel that arrived was besieged by persons who desired to be taken back. Some vessels went away without landing their stores, deterred from landing them by the fear that they would be seized. The Government of New South Wales did what they could by sending a small force of police and a hospital for the sick, but they could not do much. It seems that the rumour which led the diggers so far from home, is not wholly unsupported by scientific testimony.

From Victoria we learn that the Chinese bill has been shelved for the present year. It was sent to a special committee of the Legislative Council, and that committee had brought up its report, but the second reading was negatived by a majority of seventeen to four.

THE REVOLUTION IN SERVIA.

The Porte has sent instructions to its Minister in Belgrade, apprising him that the Skupstchina had acted without warrant in deposing Prince Alexander after the Prince had refused to abdicate. As Turkey exercises sovereign rights over Servia, it is only natural that she should consider such acts illegal unless sanctioned by herself, and on this occasion she was not even consulted. The Porte, however, does not appear to require that Prince Alexander should be restored. On the contrary, it proposes that, in the meanwhile, a Kaimakan, or chief magistrate, should be appointed, who also would be President of the Senate. Or, if this should not please, the Porte is willing that the executive authority should repose in a magisterial council, composed of those who are Ministers. Then, this done, the election of a new Prince would proceed according to the wishes of the Servians, and in the way it was done at the fall of Prince Milosch in 1839.

Thirty Servian deputies were sent off to Prince Milosch's seat near Kalafat, in Wallachia, to offer him the rod of office. He accepted it with great satisfaction, apparently. Meanwhile the Provisional Government was acting regularly, and was supported by the country. Complete tranquillity prevailed. The Skupstchina had authorised the return to their country of political exiles and emigrants.

There was a report that Austria was about to send troops to Belgrade.

THE AFFAIRS OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

The Congress of the United States meets two months before the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Thus Congress is enabled to do justice to the annual crop of grievances against Great Britain, and the English Government has the opportunity of appeasing the periodical outburst of Transatlantic wrath before our own representative institutions are brought into play. By virtue of this convenient arrangement we are in possession of information with regard to Central American affairs which we must otherwise have waited for till the beginning of February.

In the first place, we learn from a despatch of Mr. Dallas, corrected in some respects by Lord Napier, that Sir William Gore Ouseley has been employed in negotiating a treaty with Nicaragua, one of the objects of which was that surrender of the protectorate over the Mosquito territory so long regarded with dislike by the United States. Lord Malmesbury further informed Mr. Dallas that it was the intention of the British Government to protect Sir W. G. Ouseley from being interrupted in his mission by the presence of Walker and his filibusters. General Cass, it appears, considers the orders issued by the British Government for the protection of the plenipotentiary as a violation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. These orders were, that if the State of Nicaragua required for its defence from filibusters the active intervention of military power, a British armed force was to land, seize them, and hand them over, if Americans, to their own Government, and, having done this, retire immediately. This intervention was only to be exercised during the time the diplomatic representative of the British Government was in the country. Mr. Dallas seems to fear that the English naval officers might, under such circumstances, become mere tools of the dominant party in Nicaragua, and seize as filibusters whomsoever they chose to designate by that name. He maintains also that, although the British Government has no right to use force for the purpose of defending its diplomatic representative, because such force would be an "occupation" within the meaning of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, no such difficulty would accrue from an armed intervention by the United States, in accordance with the President's message, for the purpose of opening the route across the Isthmus,—that is, of placing it in the permanent "occupation" of the United States. Lord Malmesbury thinks both proceedings would be right—our protection of our diplomatist, and the American protection of the route. Mr. Dallas thinks the American intervention would be right, but ours wrong. The objection comes with an ill grace at the time when we are actually engaged in an attempt to get rid of that Mosquito protectorate which the United States contend is an "occupation" within the meaning of the treaty.

Passing over matters of less consequence, we come to a correspondence carried on at San Juan del Norte between Commander M'Intosh, of the United States' ship *Routouke*, and Captain Sir William Aldham, of her Majesty's steamer *Valorous*. The American officer complains that the American steamer *Washington* was visited by two officers of the *Valorous* at San Juan del Norte, and that the American steamer *Catherine Maria* was visited in the Colorado River by Captain Wainwright, of her Majesty's ship *Leopard*. Captain Wainwright's offence seems to have been that he went on board the vessel, asked whether they had seen any filibusters, and, being answered in the negative, immediately withdrew. This statement Commander M'Intosh considered satisfactory. Sir William Aldham's offence was of a deeper die. Fifteen minutes after the *Washington* entered the harbour of San Juan two officers from the *Valorous* boarded her, and asked the following questions:—"Where from?" "How many passengers have you?" "How many days out from New York?" "Did you stop at any port on your way out?" "Are all your passengers Americans?" "Are they armed?" "Has your hold been examined by the American officers?" On this Commander M'Intosh observes that his instructions are most rigid in regard to the boarding, delaying, or "hauling" American merchant vessels, and that he sees no distinction between filibusters and Africans. Sir William Aldham replies, that the vessel was in a port under the protection of Great Britain, that the visit was in accordance with established usage, and that the vessel, being at anchor, was put to no inconvenience by the inquiries. Commander M'Intosh denies that under the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty San Juan del Norte is under the protection of the British Crown, but expresses a belief that no offence was meant, and so the correspondence ends.

We confess it appears to us that the American Government and its agents are pushing matters very far indeed, and by no means respond to the frank and friendly manner in which the practice of visitation and search in time of peace has been by our Government entirely surrendered. It really seems to come to this—that no English naval officer can go on board an American ship, however conciliatory his conduct, however unassuming his demeanour, however unwilling or unable he may be to apply compulsion, without giving to the United States a *casus belli* against this country.—*Times*.

The ISLAND CALLED SANTA FRANCA, formed by the Po, and formerly belonging to Austria, is, by agreement with that Power, now annexed to the Duchy of Parma, the river having formed an alluvial deposition between the sand island and the Parmesan bank, so as to connect them permanently.

THE INDIAN REVOLT.

A TELEGRAPHIC despatch gives us the following intelligence from India:—

"The amnesty is slowly but surely thinning the ranks of the rebels; and there is good reason for believing that the whole country will be restored to peace without much additional bloodshed."

"On the 4th of November a force, commanded by Lord Clyde in person, having marched sixty-one miles in sixty hours, completely defeated Bene Mahdo Singh and a large army of rebels, at Dundea Klará, nearly opposite Futtelpoor; the enemy was driven out of the dense jungle, and afterwards chased for miles by guns and cavalry; their loss was enormous; many were drowned in the Ganges. Bene Mahdo fled down the river. Oomrao Sing escaped towards Cawnpore Road. The rabble threw away their arms, and fled to the steep ravines in which the country abounds."

"On the 28th of November the Commander-in-Chief arrived at Lucknow; the health of our troops is said to be excellent."

"On the 21st of November General Grant recrossed the Goomtee; the rebels, in considerable numbers, disputed the passage, but were forced to fly with great loss; six of their guns were taken."

"Tantia Topee continues to avoid the ingenuity of his pursuers."

"He is said to have entered Guzerat."

The "Bombay Gazette" announces the death of General John Jacob, on the 6th of December, from an attack of brain fever.

We have news of Nena Sahib, from the correspondent of the "Times," who says—"on the 5th of November, Nena Sahib, with a considerable force, crossed the Ganges between Futtghur and Cawnpore, having successfully eluded the corps of Barker and Colin Troup, posted on the Goomtee at Benigunj and Alizung. Brigadier Showers moved out from Agra on the 7th of November to oppose him. But if Nena only marches as fast as Tantia Topee, Brigadier Showers will have little chance of coming up with him. I accordingly expect that Nena will make good his passage across the Doab and the Junna, and penetrate into Central India. There can be little doubt that this move of his is like the last desperate throw of the gamester. He will endeavour to enter the Deccan; but energetic measures have already been taken on this side to prevent the success of such an attempt."

The Nawab of Banda, who accompanied Tantia Topee in his flight, surrendered himself to Lieutenant Kerr's force near Charwa on the 17th of October, from sheer inability, it is alleged, longer to sustain the privations and sufferings of the flight. The surrender was made upon the single condition that his life should be spared until the instructions of the supreme government were received.

THE LIVINGSTONE EXPEDITION.

The Cape papers publish a letter from Dr. Livingstone. He had reached Tete, and had received there a supply of coal for his steamer—the first ever dug in that country. They were pronounced by the engineer and geologist to be good. "There is no end of the finest iron; so with coal and iron surely something will yet be done in Africa."

"This (his steam launch) was the first thing of the steamer kind ever seen at Tete, and we were visited with as much interest as is the Great Eastern. Foremost among our visitors were my Makololo companions. They grasped my hands and arms convulsively, and jubiloso for joy. About thirty of them have died from small-pox, and six were killed by a rebel chief, who, in defiance of Portuguese authority, holds a stockade at the confluence of the Luenga. This grieves them and me more than anything. The excuse is, he did it in a fit of drunkenness. There were three such rebels, half-caste Portuguese of Goa, who defied the Portuguese. One, who had a stockade at the mouth of the river, has just now been conquered by the Governor of Killimane. The war has been against us, though we have gone from one side to the other, without molestation, as friends of both, or rather as English, for it is the English name that was our passport. I came one night to a party after dark, and created an alarm, but that was quelled when I called out 'Ingleze!'"

Dr. Livingstone has found the shallowness of the river a bar to his progress, and he suggests improvements in the navigation.

THE DISUNITED STATES.—The new Governor of South Carolina, in his inaugural message, says:—"It is to be hoped that no occasion will arise requiring the State to call upon her sons for defence of her rights and institutions. But, believing this hope to prove fallacious, we should not only endeavour to unite the State, but the entire South; so that, when we can no longer retain our place in the Confederacy, we will be prepared to form a perfect Union, under the style and title of the United States of the South."

THE BONAPARTES AT ST. DENIS.—In the "Bulletin des Lois" of Sunday was published an Imperial decree, formally ordaining that the Cathedral of St. Denis shall be the burying-place of the Emperors of the French. It is known to be the wish of the Emperor to remove the remains of his uncle from the Invalides to St. Denis, but Prince Jerome is opposed to the measure, and in all probability the splendid tomb in the Invalides, of which he is the guardian, will not be desecrated as long as he lives. The Emperor thinks it would be more "dynamic" that his family should be buried among the ancient kings of France, and he wishes particularly to place the body of Napoleon I. on that very spot—which as all visitors to St. Denis will have remarked—he is represented in one of the painted glass windows as selecting for his final resting-place.

SHAMEFUL DUEL.—A fatal duel has occurred in Belgium. Some officers were playing at whist, when one of them, Brouwe, used some offensive remarks to Pierard. Next day, armed with muskets, and attended by a sergeant and a private, they went into the country. Arrived at a convenient spot, the two adversaries placed themselves at a distance from each other of, as one party said, sixty paces, but, as another alleged, of only forty paces. They took the fuses from the hands of the witnesses, who having withdrawn for some distance, M. Pierard, although the offended party, fired his gun in the air. His adversary, however, it appears, took deadly and deliberate aim, and lodged his ball in the abdomen of Pierard, causing a frightful wound. The unfortunate man, after about twenty minutes of excruciating suffering, expired in the arms of the sous-officer who had accompanied him. He had previously uttered a few words intimating that it had been his fixed determination to spare his adversary.

MR. GLADSTONE AT ATHENS.—Mr. Gladstone reached Athens on the 17th, and was received by Sir T. Wyse, her Majesty's Minister, at the British Embassy. A dinner and ball took place the next day and evening, on which occasions Sir T. Wyse presented Mr. Gladstone to the most distinguished politicians of Greece, excepting those of the Russian party. Many learned men were also introduced to her Majesty's Special Envoy; each and all complimenting the Right Hon. Gentleman in no measured terms. Next day he took Mr. Finlay, an English gentleman, with him to the senate, where he remained more than two hours listening to the debates, and in the evening dined with the King and Queen, there being more than eighty persons present. The following morning Mr. Gladstone visited the Chamber of Deputies, and on the 23rd left for Corinth in order to spend Christmas-day with the Lord High Commissioner.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR CONGRESS.—James Gordon Bennett, editor of the "New York Herald," having been announced in several papers as a candidate for Congress, thus sets the matter at rest:—"There is evidently a mistake in this. We can't be a candidate. We pay our debts; we were never indicted as an alderman for taking 100-dollar bribes. We don't visit low grog shops, nor chew tobacco, nor drink bad whisky, nor carry lobby fees of ten-dollars in our breeches pockets, as Greely did for Matheson. We are, in a word, not qualified for a seat in Congress." (Those who are best acquainted with Mr. Bennett's history and character are of opinion that he is too modest.)

THE SULTAN AND HIS DUNS.—A Constantinople letter, of the 18th of December, says:—"A demonstration took place, a few days ago, on the part of the persons who supply the Palace, and whose accounts still remain unpaid. The Sultan was on his way from Top Hanç, where he had breakfasted, to the Palace of Dolma Bakchê, when he was met by an assemblage of nearly 300 of these creditors, who crowded round the imperial cortège calling for justice. The first movement of the Sultan, at finding himself surrounded by this crowd, who were uttering loud cries, was to lay hold of the hilt of his sabre, but, soon discovering the pacific character of the demonstration, he ordered that three of the creditors should be delegated to call on Haki Bey, who should that very evening receive the necessary orders on the subject of the claims. The following day three of the principal creditors waited on Haki Bey, who sent them to Riza Pacha, the president of the commission formed for the settlement of the accounts of the civil list, but which only held one or two sittings, for form's sake. Riza assured them that all their accounts should be paid, but that at present funds were wanting. Meantime, many of these unfortunate men, who are pressed by their own creditors, have been obliged to suspend payment, and several of them have been completely ruined. A similar demonstration was made two days after by the workmen of the imperial buildings."

IRELAND.

THE LORD-LIEUTENANT AND THE GALWAY LINE.—A deputation had an interview with the Lord-Lieutenant last week to urge upon him the importance of supporting the Galway line of packets. The Viceroy repeated an expression of his desire to see the undertaking of Mr. Lever prosper; but expressed a doubt whether the country would sanction the appropriation of public money to support the experiment. The arrangements for the Newfoundland mail contract are finally completed, and the first departure from Galway is to take place to-day (Saturday).

SCOTLAND.

FATAL ACCIDENT AT GLASGOW THEATRE.—A sad occurrence, somewhat like the recent disaster at the Victoria Theatre, London, took place on Saturday evening in Glasgow. While the audience were leaving the pit of the Queen's Theatre, a number of children were severely injured by the crush, several being knocked down and trampled upon. One poor girl, of about fourteen years old, was killed.

A POLICEMAN SHOT.—On Friday morning, about two o'clock, whilst policeman Donald Allen, of Edinburgh was going his rounds, he was fired at from some place near the entrance of the rope-works at Gilmore Place. From the darkness of the night the assailant could not be seen; but the officer suspects him to be a young man against whom he gave evidence some twelve months ago in reference to a charge of assault, and who has attacked him on two occasions with a drawn sword. The injuries received by the policeman, though not serious, are very severe.

SUSPECTED MURDER IN EDINBURGH.—A man named Thorburn is in custody at Edinburgh on a charge of murdering his wife. She was found dead with marks of violent treatment on her body; but a post-mortem examination united in a belief that she had died of suffocation, and that the suffocation was not self-caused.

THE PROVINCES.

MILES'S BOYS.—A correspondent of the "Sherbourne Journal" draws attention to the fact that Mr. Miles, the well-known Tory member for East Somerset, has, in his character of colonel of a Somersetshire regiment of yeomanry cavalry, actually appropriated no fewer than five commissions to his family. "It appears," says the writer, "that this happy family of 'Miles's Boys,' consists of Colonel Miles, Major Miles, Captain Miles, Lieutenant Miles, and Cornet Miles. A Miles in every rank, forming one-fifth of the entire list of officers, besides others closely connected to the worthy Colonel by marriage, but owning no other connection of any sort with the county."

MELANCHOLY DEATH OF THE HON. MRS. ANSON.—The Hon. Mrs. Anson, widow of the late General Anson, Commander-in-Chief of India, was a visitor at Eckton Hall, Northamptonshire. She had suffered considerably from gout, and was in the habit of taking draughts, and applying laudanum externally to alleviate her suffering. One evening last week, while in her chamber dressing for dinner, she feared an attack was coming on, and took from one of the drawers a bottle containing, as she supposed, one of the draughts, and drank the whole off. A few minutes after she found it was laudanum she had taken. Oil, salt and water, &c., were immediately administered, the stomach pump was applied, then cold effusions, but with no satisfactory result. Galvanism was resorted to, and its powerful effect in rousing the patient justified some hope that eventually it would be successful. But all means failed; and next morning the unhappy lady breathed her last.

EXECUTION AT LIVERPOOL.—Henry Reid, the unhappy man who was convicted of the murder of his wife, was executed at noon on Monday, at the north-west corner of Kirkdale Jail. This operation did not seem to excite much attention; and the crowd was less numerous and more decorous than usually assembles on such occasions. At twelve o'clock Reid was brought out upon the scaffold, and submitted to his fate with a decent self-possession. He is described, however, as a man of "a very low order of intellect, rather simple-minded, and very docile."

THREATENING A MAGISTRATE.—A man named Bake, has been committed for trial, by the Leeds bench, for threatening to shoot Mr. Nicholson, a West Riding magistrate. The prisoner is a natural half-brother to Mr. Nicholson, and he considered himself entitled to some land, or a small annuity, which claim that gentleman did not admit.

DARING BURGLARY AT CHATHAM.—A daring burglary was committed on Saturday morning at the residence of Mr. Jones, military storekeeper, Gun-wharf, Chatham, the burglars being, it is conjectured, a party of convicts recently discharged from the convict prison there. Although sentries are posted in various parts of the Gun-wharf, the burglars contrived to obtain an entrance into the premises unperceived. Their object was to secure a large sum of money, about £800, together with about £400 worth of plate. The greatest violence was used by the burglars to effect an entrance into the office, two doors leading to which were completely smashed in. Once in the office, every drawer and desk was ransacked, but an iron safe defied the utmost efforts of the burglars. After spending some time in vain efforts, they decamped, taking with them a small bag of silver and a plated candlestick. The gates leading to the gun-wharf are always kept closed at night, and the burglars must have obtained an entrance to the wharf by scaling the boundary wall near Chatham Church, several of the instruments used by burglars being found next morning in the churchyard.

ABINGDON JAIL ABOLISHED.—At a meeting of the Berkshire magistrates, the other day, a motion for abolishing Abingdon Jail was carried by twenty-six to nineteen votes; and it was resolved that the proceedings directed by the Act of Parliament should be taken at the next quarter sessions for the purpose of giving effect to this motion.

THE CHESHIRE MURDER.—The examination of the six men charged with being concerned in the murder of James Beech and Thomas Maddocks, gamekeepers, at Doddington, in the latter part of November last, has at length resulted in the committal of two of the prisoners, John Danks and Richard Boult, for wilful murder.

DIED OF GRIEF.—A most affecting scene was witnessed in North Shields on Sunday afternoon. A seaman named Gibson lost his wife, to whom he was warmly attached. Sunday afternoon was the time appointed for interring her remains in the New Cemetery, and about four o'clock the funeral procession was passing through the village of Preston, when, as they were approaching the cemetery, Gibson staggered into the arms of a relative, and expired. A surgeon said the man had died of apoplexy. His neighbours say he died of a broken heart.

A SAD CASE.—Sergeant Dutton, of the Birmingham police, went to apprehend a young man, named Lawson, who is charged with embezzlement, and saw him in the street. Divining the purpose of the detective, Lawson took a pistol from one of his pockets, placed the muzzle to his ear, and pulled the trigger. The cap exploded, but the powder missed fire. Lawson then endeavoured to draw another pistol, but before he could do so Dutton threw his arms around him, and the prisoner was then secured. He seemed miserably dejected. On being searched, a packet of arsenic was found upon him. In his pocket was also found a letter, of which the following is an extract:—"I have gone some distance to perpetrate this rash act, as it will be kept quiet than if done nearer home. Tell father to pay my debts with the money he has of mine, that I received off Peyton's. I do not think I owe many pounds, only to one for whom I have saved hundreds till lately." When before the magistrate, Lawson seemed utterly prostrated, mentally and physically.

OPIUM EATING.—A man at Halifax, brought up for beating his wife, pleaded in excuse that she was a confirmed opium drinker. In consequence of her giving way to this habit, he said, many a time she was lying helpless in bed when she should have been up and waiting for him with breakfast when he came home from his morning's labour. To hide it from him, she had at last fallen upon the plan of having the laudanum made up in toffee.

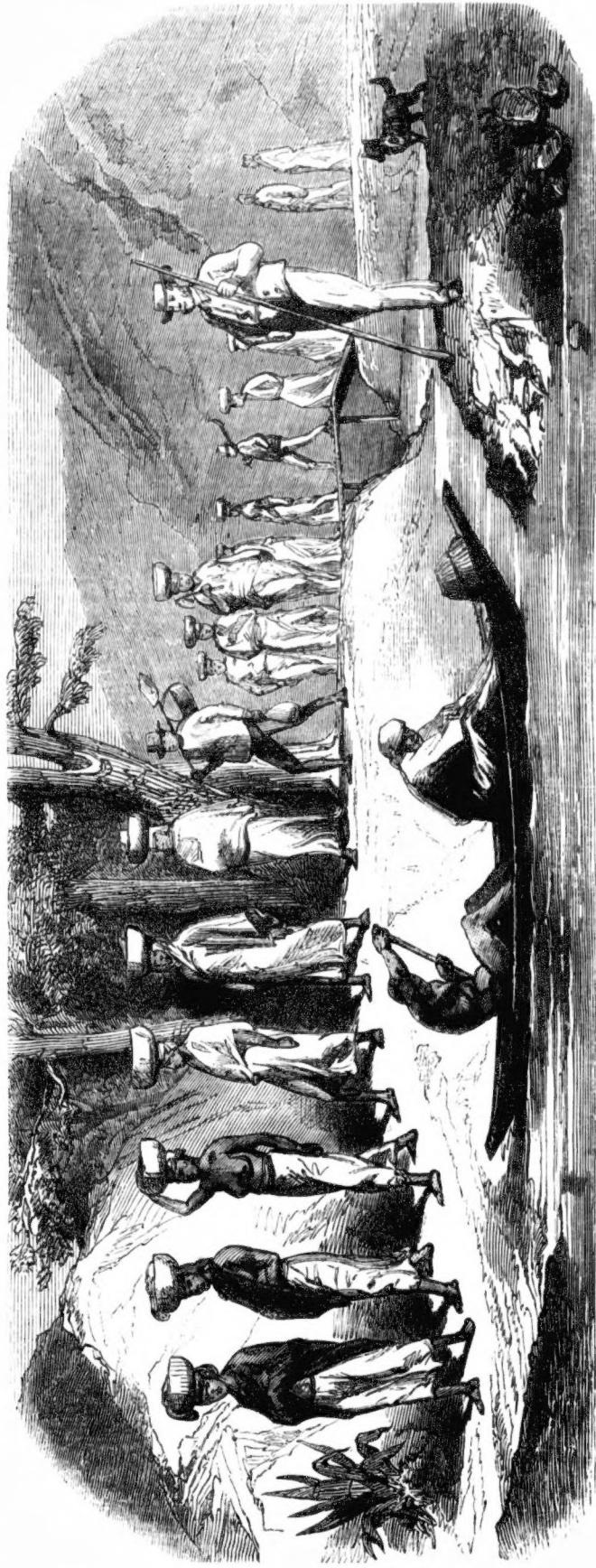
RAILWAY WARFARE.—A new railway war has broken out. The scene of conflict is appropriately enough in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth; and there a great battle has been fought. The South-Western had running powers over the Brighton and South Coast line to Portsmouth. The former company entered into arrangements with the direct Portsmouth line now in course of construction, and the Brighton Company thereupon gave notice that South-Western Company's trains could not traverse the line after the 27th. Thinking this a formal notice intended to raise a legal question, the South-Western sent a train to Portsmouth. A locomotive was found in position across the junction, and some rails had been taken up. These were relied on by the South-Western party, and one of them seeing the obstructive locomotive unguarded took possession and moved it out of the way. The train then went forward, but the skirmishers of the Brighton side tore up more rails. The South-Western train blocked up the line for two hours, and then retreated in good order.

BRITISH GUNS.—The "Liverpool Post" says:—"When the passenger-ship Isaac Wright was on fire a week ago, and all hope of saving her had been given up, she was towed up the river to the Sloyne, so that she might be scuttled, out of the way of the other ships. Some of the guns of her Majesty's frigate Hastings were fired into her at a short range, with the view of aiding in the sinking; but, strange to say, now that she lies dry, it is apparent that not a single shot penetrated her hull. This being the fact, the question naturally suggests itself, of what use are such guns in naval warfare, and more particularly when war ships are built of stouter timber than the merchant service?"

the berries of which were in their turn planted, and produced some very flourishing specimens. Several of these were sent to Louis XIV., who, in 1720, despatched them to Martinique, and from thence the plants were introduced into the island of Bourbon, and in 1730 into the Isle of France.

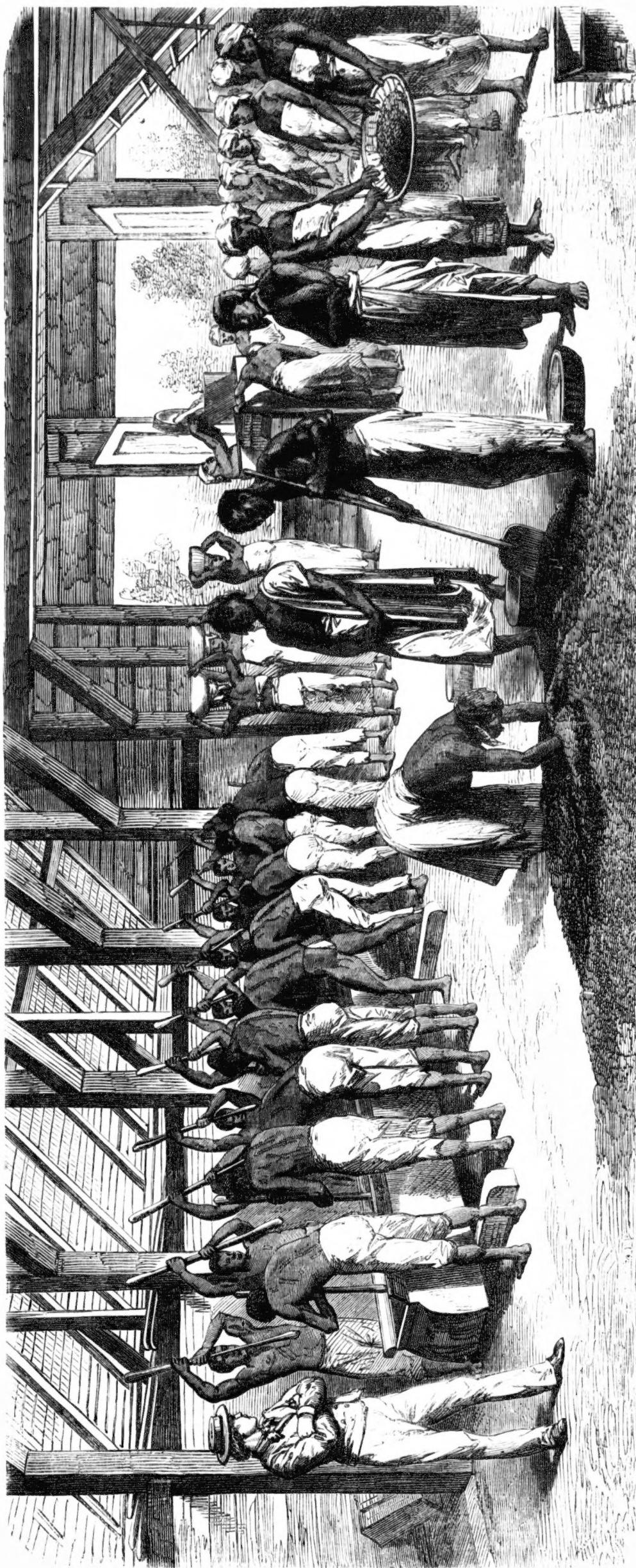
The wild coffee plant will attain the height of from fourteen to fifteen feet, but under cultivation it is never allowed to grow beyond the reach of a man's hand. It produces fruit the second year after plantation, and two crops yearly, one in May, the other in September. When the fruit is ripe, it is about as large as the common cherry, and is not unlike it both in taste and appearance. The fruit is gathered by negroes, who commence picking between six and seven o'clock in the morning, and continue incessantly at it till between four and five in the afternoon, when they return, with perhaps as many as twenty to thirty pounds, according to the crop. A plant in good condition will yield four pounds of fruit, and one hundred pounds of the fruit will yield fifteen pounds of berry.

Every morning, the fruit which has been gathered the previous day, is passed between two cylinders for the purpose of removing the outer skin or shell. This operation releases the stone of the fruit, which consists of two berries held together by a pellicle, not unlike parchment in colour and substance. The



THE COFFEE PLANT. Abreus, in his "Travels in Abyssinia," written between 1768 and 1773, tells us that the coffee plant is a native of Egypt. It is certainly to be found in its wild state in the north of Kaffa, a district in the province of Navea, and it is probable that the plant takes its name from that place. The first writer who makes any reference to it is a doctor named Rawolf, of Augsbourg. He wrote a treatise on the plant, of whose stimulating qualities he spoke in very high terms.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century the plant was introduced into Arabia, and from thence it was taken, in 1690, to Batavia by Van Hoorn, who was at that time Governor of Java. He cultivated the plant with such care and attention, that he succeeded in producing, in the course of time, a miniature plantation, and to this nursery most of the colonial plantations owe their origin. Van Hoorn sent several of his plants to the burgomaster of Amsterdam, who as chairman to the Dutch East Indian Company, was anxious to learn something of the qualities of a plant which he had been told would in the course of a few years be productive of untold wealth to the company. He sent them to the Botanical Garden, where they were planted in the soil of a hot-house, and thrived so rapidly and so well, that after the second year they yielded fruit,



COFFEE GATHERERS AT SURINAM ON THEIR WAY TO WORK.

NEGROES SEPARATING THE COFFEE DERRY FROM THE HUSK.



OLD WALKING-STICKS.

berries, as we term them, are then exposed to the rays of a tropical sun for several days, and when perfectly dry, are stowed away until required for exportation. It has, then, to undergo two operations—the first consists in thrashing or pounding it to free it from the pellicle; the second is sorting the broken berries from the whole ones, and from

such particles of the pellicle as may cling to them. The mode in which both operations are performed is shown in our illustration, which is from a series of sketches made in Surinam.

Five minutes' labour suffices to free the coffee from the husk. The negroes are so accustomed to the work that they know to a minute when they should cease pounding to avoid crushing the berry. One of them, generally the first in the row, cries out, "*Mahow!*" dwelling sharply on the last syllable. As soon as they stop, they all rest their clubs on the ground, which is a signal for the women to empty the berries from the trough. This is again filled, and the negroes continue their labour, which they endeavour to enliven by singing in chorus certain African melodies, certainly anything but pleasing to European ears.

The negroes at Surinam are far above those employed on the sugar plantations in the West Indies, and would appear to be of a distinct race. They are more easily led, and seem to appreciate the domestic habits the Dutch have taught them to follow. They take pride in the appearance of their homes, and the women spend nearly all their spare time in cultivating vegetables and fruit for family use. Some of their gardens are laid out with much taste, and the primitive houses they build are put together with much ingenuity, and are constructed on principles which would convey some valuable ideas to European builders. The men are expert in throwing the lance, and, when not engaged on the plantations, pass much of their time in fishing and hunting, and can undergo any amount of fatigue in search of game. They are allowed by the planters to have what coffee they require for domestic use, and they consume an astonishing quantity. They drink it very thick and very hot, before and after every meal, and always at smoking, at which they are dragons also.

OLD WALKING-STICKS.

It would seem that at the present time the fashion of carrying walking-sticks has to a considerable extent "gone out." So great is the bustle in our city thoroughfares, that the use of a staff, except by those who are lame, is seldom adopted by business people. Professional men still affect the custom, however; and your city man, although he may repudiate the use of a walking-stick in town, straps a good sapling to his portmanteau whenever he has a chance of getting amongst the woods and green fields. About a century and a half ago, everybody carried a cane. Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and a host of others, considered a good stick as necessary as a coat; and a collection of these staves would, if they could be had at the present day, be valuable, not only as relics, but also as an indication of the characters of the owners, perhaps.

In former times, a golden-mounted stick or staff was commonly used by both the male and female heads of families. Queen Elizabeth carried one of these towards the end of her life. They were then more frequently used, however, as a sign of authority than for any other purpose.

The staff was a weapon long before flint-headed arrows and such-like instruments were invented. Sheriffs, and others high in authority, have wands or staffs borne before them on important occasions; the bishop's pastoral staff is as old as episcopal authority.

In former times the running footmen, who, in a body of half a dozen, on each side of a carriage ran to alarm robbers and to assist the lumbering vehicle out of the ruts, were well armed with stout staves. At the present time they are still carried by the Plush family, although the use of them is not so clear. In the royal state processions, the



STATUE OF VIRGIN AND CHILD, DISCOVERED ON THE SITE OF THE ALMONRY, WESTMINSTER.

footmen with their staves walk as in former days, and we should be sorry were these little bits of ceremony dispensed with, inasmuch as they bring to recollection a former condition of things, which make us feel comfortable by comparison.

The monstrous sticks shown in the engraving are drawn from specimens which have been preserved by dealers in London, and put as a sort of sign at the doors of umbrella and walking-stick dealers. These were, however, a little more than a century ago, common enough, and might have been seen by the hundred together, borne by tall footmen behind ladies in the old hooped dresses which we are trying now to imitate. At that time, there was also a taste for various kinds of monsters, in china, wood, and other materials. Monkeys and pug-dogs were made pets of, and the sticks of the footmen fashioned into such ugly forms as no modern bogey ever dreamed of.

These clubs, sticks, maces, or whatever they may be called, were about six feet high, and were in parts painted and gilt. The centre one is an elm-sapling, and the natural knobs have been taken advantage of by the artist to model a sort of Moorish head, with ornamental covering; lower down, the knobs are fashioned into terrible heads, in which are mounted glass eyes of various and impossible colours.



BRITISH FISHERIES, NO. 6 : LEIGH BOATS SHRIMPING.—(FROM A SKETCH BY G. H. ANDREWS.)

No doubt before long these staffs, which might be necessary for the protection of the ladies from the "Mohawks" of the time, will have disappeared, and people will look with curiosity at Hogarth's representation of them. Perhaps good specimens of such objects, which have passed out of use, would be worthy of a place in our national museum. One of the old-fashioned tinder-boxes would be a curiosity there now. Although but a few years have passed since the introduction of lucifer matches, it is no easy matter to get one of those old-fashioned machines.

STATUE OF VIRGIN AND CHILD

DISCOVERED ON THE SITE OF THE ALMONRY, WESTMINSTER.

The statue, or rather statuette, above engraved, was recently found on the spot where once stood the Almonry at Westminster. It was discovered at about twelve feet from the surface of the ground, during the excavations for the foundations of the Westminster Palace Hotel.

With the exception of the two heads, the group was perfect when first discovered, the spade of the workman having unfortunately cut through the left hand of the figure of the Virgin. The group is of sandstone, and, from the presence of gold in the folds of the drapery, we infer that it was richly gilt. The head of the smaller figure was apparently fixed on after carving; but the head of the Virgin was carved "out of the solid." The length of the figure is eleven inches on the shoulder.

BRITISH FISHERIES, NO. 6.—LEIGH BOATS SHRIMPING.

At the mouth of the river Thames, four miles west of Southend, is situated one of the most quaint picturesque little villages on the English coast, the name of which is Leigh. It is inhabited entirely by fishermen, who work about and on the numerous sand-banks lying in the estuary of the Thames.

The village of Leigh, until the opening of the Southend and Tilbury Railway, was perhaps the most out-of-the-way and least known spot in England, being situated on the south coast of Essex, quite off the main road, and the only way through the village terminating in the mud on the sea-shore. The railway now runs right through what was the principal street, and has a station in the centre of the village. We would recommend visitors to Southend to stop at Leigh for an hour or two and look about them, for there is a good deal to see that is very interesting, both in the place and the immediate neighbourhood.

The church is a fine structure, and from it a most remarkable view may be had of the Kentish shore, extending from Gravesend right down to Margate; while opposite is Sheerness, and the entrance to the river Medway. By a short walk from Leigh, westward, you reach the ruins of Hadleigh Castle, from which there is a very fine view of the whole length of sea-reach. The ruins are rather extensive, and are most pleasantly situated on a richly wooded bold hill, of considerable height. This was a favourite spot with that truly English landscape painter, Constable; one of his finest pictures is of these ruins, and the extensive view obtained from them.

A little further west there is another quaint little village called Benfleet, well worth looking at, it has a remarkably picturesque church, the porch of which is a fine example of its class, being constructed of oak admirably carved.

Leigh and Benfleet are both situated on a creek which extends from near to Southend round to Hole Haven, in the Thames, thus forming what is called Convey Island. A stranger arriving at Leigh at high water time would imagine the place built on the edge of the sea, as a fine open expanse of salt water would then lie before him; opposite he would see the masts of the men-of-war at Sheerness, and away to the eastward the Nore-light ship, and beyond all, right away, no land. But with the ebbing of the tide comes a sad change; the fine open sea in front becomes green grass and mud, and huge tracts of gravelly ground, upon which winkles, cockles, &c., love to dwell, and sea weeds to grow. But, where is the open sea? Not within miles of the place. At high water you think yourself at the sea side, but at low water you find you are up a creek, out of sight of the sea altogether, and it is that circumstance that makes it a most excellent position for the fishermen who reside in it, as they can lie with their boats in perfect safety here when not at work, and yet are close to the fishing grounds when tide and time suit for carrying on their operations. There are some 150 boats belonging to the place, varying in size, the largest being about thirty-eight feet long and thirteen feet beam, the average size of the modern class of boats being thirty-three feet long and twelve feet beam. The modern boats are chiefly built on the spot, and are as fine specimens of this class of vessel as may be met with anywhere. The old boats are chiefly of the class called "Peter boats." We shall describe this class of vessel more particularly in a future article on the Old Lambeth Fishery.

The chief occupation of the Leigh fishermen is catching shrimps. This they do throughout the summer months, and the smaller boats continue to catch them during the winter; but the larger vessels, when the demand for shrimps falls off, go farther away to sea, hand and long-lining for cod, or fit out with stow-boat gear for catching sprats, or go trawling. They fish during winter about the Swin, the Barrow Deep, the Waleet, and other places, remaining at sea for weeks together; but in the summer their practice is to go out one tide and return the next, and a very pretty sight it is to see this little fleet of a hundred and fifty vessels all working in and out of Leigh Creek together, boats of all sizes, and sails of every cut and colour, and if it be about sunrise or evening time when this happens, it makes a most charming picture.

Shrimps are caught all over the sands that lie in the Thames estuary; the manner of catching them is this:—An apparatus (similar in principle to what we have described in a former article as a trawl) is constructed in the following manner:—

A frame of wood about six or eight feet long (it may be of any size) is formed, and upon this is placed a net, in such a manner that the net and frame, when complete, shall form a long pointed bag; to the wooden frame is attached a long rope, by which it is lowered to the bottom, and when there dragged along by the motion of the boat through the water. The edge of the wooden-frame scrapes along the sand and compels the shrimps to enter the net; when in, they quickly get back to the end of the pocket, where the mesh is fine, and they are secured. Each boat is provided with three or four of these little trawls. At Gravesend, where there is also a large fleet of craft employed in shrimping, they use a much larger description of net, and each boat is sufficiently equipped with one of these.

Shrimping-boats must be provided with a well, in which the fish are placed the moment they are caught; as soon as they are taken from this well, on the arrival of the boat at Leigh, they are placed in a copper of boiling sea-water and boiled at once; when cool, they are forwarded to London as quickly as possible.

As many as a thousand gallons of shrimps are sometimes sent to London in a single day from this place alone, but the poor fishermen get but little of the profit. In some way or other, the value of the shrimps is consumed between them and the consumer; the price of a gallon of shrimps in London being 4s. retail, out of which the fisherman seldom gets more than 3d. First comes the boiling, 1d. per gallon; then the Railway Company, having run off the road the vans which formerly carried the fish to London, raise the charge for carriage up to the old posting price of 2d. per gallon, or the scandalous rate of £9 6s. 8d. per ton; then the salesman at Billingsgate charges 3d. per gallon for selling them. But all this only makes 6d. per gallon. What becomes of the remaining 3s. 6d.? Out of it the fisherman seldom gets more than 3d., so that the retail dealer gets thirteen times as much for selling the shrimps, as the poor fellows who work hard day and night at sea to catch them. But we do not think the retail dealers get the enormous profit they are said to do. We believe that there is a hole at Billingsgate, or somewhere else between the fisherman and the consumer, into which falls three-fourths of the profit that should properly go to the men who risk their lives and vessels in thrashing the sea, winter and summer, for the smallest pay and hardest fare got by any class of working men. We shall in a future article again refer to this subject, for we do not think the fisherman at present gets fair play.

FATAL ACCIDENT AT THE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION.

A very serious accident, similar to that which occurred at the Victoria Theatre, happened at the Royal Polytechnic Institution, on Monday. About half-past ten o'clock, just before the establishment was about to close, one of the main staircases leading from the hall to the exhibition gave way, and all who were on it fell into the space below.

The consequence was that a child eight years of age was killed, and a large number of persons were more or less injured.

The audience, it appears, were dispersing, at about a quarter to eleven o'clock, and the main body had passed safely out of the building when the catastrophe occurred. The right-hand circular staircase, which was thronged with the last portion of the audience, gave way, with a tremendous crash, precipitating itself with some fourteen or fifteen people on to an under circular or duplicate staircase of similar construction, leading to the lower theatre. The poor sufferers were hurled from a height of some thirty feet, one upon another, to the basement of the hall below.

The staircases, which have two spiral flights from a centre, had been worn away by the continued traffic of years, and had been recently covered over with an iron lattice-work on the surface from top to bottom, with the supposed object of strengthening them; but it is thought, from an inspection of the material, that the masons, in interwaving this iron lattice-work all over the steps (which gives them the appearance of a tessellated pavement) cut too deep into the stone, in order to fix in the iron and incorporate it with the steps, and that it is to this excessive incision that the calamity is owing. On Monday week (Boxing-day) no fewer than 5,000 persons passed in and out of the Polytechnic over the same flight of steps without accident.

THE REVENUE.

The new year properly commenced with the publication of the accounts of the revenue for the year and quarter which both terminated on the 31st ult. These figures are interesting. There is an increase on the quarter as compared with the corresponding period in 1857 of £1,125,496; a decrease on the year of £1,103,347 due wholly to the reduction of the Income-tax, which shows a total fall of £7,546,809. We borrow a summary from one of our daily contemporaries—

"There is an increase in the Customs on the *quart' r* of £619,169 when compared with 1857, but a decrease of £20,000 if the comparison be made with 1856; on the *year* the increase as compared with 1857 is £1,627,618, but £618,000 only when compared with 1856. These increases are owing also in part to a reduction of balances in the hands of collectors; the net increase arises principally upon sugar, tea, corn, and tobacco. The increase in the excise on the quarter is £235,000, and £494,000 on the year, arising chiefly from the malt duty. The results, when compared with 1856, are less favourable, there being a decrease on the year 1858, as compared with 1856, of £108,490. As the increase of duty on Irish spirits was estimated to yield an increased revenue of half a million, the result in this respect is not satisfactory."

"The Revenue from Stamps is more encouraging; the Quarter shows an increase of £268,000 beyond 1856; the increase on the year 1858 as compared with 1857 is £727,120, and about the same sum as compared with 1856; the augmentation arises from an improvement in the receipts from the Succession Duty and other heads of Revenue, and from the new tax on Bankers' Cheques.

"The Revenue derived from Land and Assessed Taxes shows a small progressive improvement, owing to an additional number of new houses having been brought under assessment. The quarter's increase is £22,000, and that upon the year £51,013. The Income-tax shows a decrease of £261,437 on the quarter, and of £7,546,809 on the year—a result naturally to be expected from the remission of taxation. The Post-office exhibits an increase of £50,000 on the quarter, and of £83,000 on the year, due mainly to the progressive increase of the business of that department.

"The Crown Lands Revenue remains nearly stationary.

"The head of 'Miscellaneous' shows an increase of £192,264 on the quarter, and of £453,895 on the year, but these increases are merely owing to the return of moneys into the Exchequer, and cannot be looked upon in the light of permanent revenue."

LORD CLYDE'S FATHER.—A Glasgow paper has the following communication from a correspondent:—"I observe in your paper of the 29th of December the death of Lord Clyde's father. He was an apprentice to a cabinetmaker in Argyle Street, Glasgow, towards the end of the last century. The person to whom he was bound as an apprentice having died in 1800, John M'Liver became a journeyman cabinetmaker to his master's brother and successor. A gentleman informed me that he remembered Colin M'Liver perfectly well as being a black-headed boy and very lively. He used to run about the workshops of these cabinetmakers. John M'Liver was a steady, well-behaved workman, and in point of intelligence was rather superior. There is a gentleman in the city who was getting instructions in cabinetmaking, and is still alive, who told me that he worked at the same bench as John M'Liver. The same gentleman was in Gibson's class in the Glasgow Grammar School with Lord Clyde, then standing simply 'Colin M'Liver' upon the roll of the class. His schoolfellow, as is well known, invited Lord Clyde to a class dinner when he was in Glasgow, and his Lordship attended, and spent a happy evening with them. It is rather singular, but it has never been explained, how Lord Clyde did not visit his father in Mull, when he was so near his aged parent's place of residence. It is said that Lord Clyde had been in the practice for many years of allowing his father an annuity of £30, which the old man said was quite sufficient to keep him comfortable, and more than he had been accustomed to spend. Lord Clyde entered the army by the advice of his mother's relations, who assisted him at that time. Mrs. M'Liver's maiden name was 'Campbell,' and Lord Clyde assumed that name as being a more dignified military name than M'Liver."

NEW BREECH-LOADING CANNON.—A new breech-loading cannon (lately experimented on at Chatham) seems to be attracting much attention. The model, which is of brass, and only four inches in length from the breech to the muzzle, has been subjected to the most severe tests, and always with satisfactory results. Although of such diminutive length, it propelled the balls to a distance of at least 200 yards, doing effective execution at 100 yards. With the greatest ease the gun is made to fire ten rounds per minute, and on one occasion fifty rounds were fired in seven seconds less than five minutes, the shot at each discharge striking an object at 100 yards distance. Notwithstanding the rapidity with which the model was loaded and fired, the gun remained as cool at the close of the experiments as it was at the commencement, the opening at the breech admitting a current of air to pass through the gun, thus entirely doing away with the serious evils resulting from the heating of cannon caused by incessant firing, which, it is well known, will in a comparatively short time render a piece of ordnance almost useless. The inventor is now engaged completing a model of his breech-loading cannon of much larger dimensions, for the purpose of submitting it to the Duke of Cambridge.

A PATRIOT'S REWARD.—The following story is told of a Revolutionary soldier, who was running for Congress:—"It appears that he was opposed by a much younger man, who had never 'been to the wars,' and it was the wont of 'Revolutionary' to tell the people of the hardships he endured. Says he:—"Fellow-citizens, I have fought and bled for my country; I helped to whip the British and Indians. I have slept on the field of battle with no other covering than the canopy of heaven. I have walked over frozen ground till every footprint was marked with blood." Just about this time one of the 'sovereigns,' who had become very much affected by this tale of woe, walks up in front of the speaker, wiping the tears from his eyes with the extremity of his coat tail, and interrupting him, says:—"Did you say that you had fought the British and the Indians?" "Yes," responded Revolutionary. "Did you say that you had slept on the ground while serving your country without a kiver?" "Yes, sir, I did." "Did you say you had followed the enemy of your country over frozen ground till every footprint was covered with blood?" "Yes," exultingly replied the speaker. "Well, then," says the tearful 'sovereign,' as he gave a sigh of painful emotion, "I'm blamed if I don't think you've done enough for your country, and I'll vote for the other man."—American Paper.

THE PERMANENT ESTABLISHMENT of a remount agency at Cape Town, for the supply of horses in India, is now almost a matter of certainty.

THE AUSTRIAN ARMY (says the "Times") was extremely weak and miserably equipped in 1848, but now no army in Europe is better prepared to take the field.

THE JAIL OF NEWGATE.

An important report has been presented by the Rev. John Davis, the Ordinary of Newgate, to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of the City of London, upon the subject of recent alterations that have been made in the interior of the prison of Newgate, and the effect of these alterations upon the prisoners. The Rev. Gentleman commences his report by stating that for more than two months the north side of the prison has been opened on the separate system, for the reception of male prisoners, and that, although the expense has no doubt been serious, the moral effect of the alteration abundantly compensates for any expense whatever. Mr. Davis says:—

"I find the result of present to be, not only the entire suppression of the corrupt and demoralising effect of indiscriminate association, but a peculiar serenity and quietness is produced by separate confinement, which, except in a few instances, I never witnessed before. Dishonest persons, and those addicted to crime, as a habit, generally strive under a forced gaiety and hilarity of manner to conceal or suppress the genuine effects of guilt on the mind. Nothing is more common among incorrigible convicts than the hectic laugh, profane jest, and half lunatic grin, that denote to a careful observer the real unctuousness of the conscience. But to elicit these symptoms of guilt and depravity there is a necessity for companions; apart by himself the joke is lost, the hero of daring dishonesty has no listener, and, instead of being surrounded by companions who exult in his mirth and applaud his narrow escapes, he has the profound silence of solitude and the darkness of night by himself to think over the errors he has engendered, and the injuries he has inflicted during his whole career. The result is a greater degree of seriousness, less boisterous demeanour, and, as far as external appearance extends, a marked and decided improvement."

But with reference to the effect of solitary confinement upon the minds of the prisoners, the Ordinary says:—

"There are, however, two periods of great anxiety in the case of many prisoners who are thus confined. The first is, when they are apprehended and taken out of their families, cut off from all domestic sympathies, and placed in separate confinement to meditate over their fallen condition. That many persons would, under such circumstances, be overpowered with dismal reflections, so as to contemplate desperate measures, is no more than you would reasonably expect. The same remark applies with even greater force to the forty-eight hours after their trial and some unexpectedly heavy sentence. Hope never has had a more fertile place to expand in than the breast of a criminal. The slightest fact that is favourable, the smallest discrepancy in the evidence, the chance that an important witness may be absent, and the probability that some point of law may turn in his favour, are quite enough to create a strong anticipation of escape. That too many unprincipled agents, or solicitors, cherish, feed, and foster these delusions, and become most indignant at a doubt being expressed of their perfect accuracy, a long experience tells me is too true. The way that prisoners are buoyed up with unwarranted expectations arising out of one, or other, or more of these causes, is extraordinary, and hence it arises that parties, so elated by false anticipations, feel proportionately disappointed, and suffer with the greatest keenness for two or three days after all these delusions have been destroyed. A person in separate confinement requires to be watched at both these times, and the most solicitous efforts are made to guard against any evil results from these causes."

The Ordinary also states, —

"Prison offences are greatly diminished by the present mode of confinement. Litigious, bad-tempered men have no one to quarrel with. By evil habits, quarrelling becomes a part of their nature. With no one to blame, no one to scold, no one to contradict, peacefulness becomes too tame, and their ill-concealed disposition would break out against the turnkeys; but the recollection that there are cells totally dark and underground makes the incorrigible convict become prudent. These horrible abodes have never been required but once, and that was with an old returned transport, just of the character described above, and a few hours tamed him completely, and during the rest of his stay in the prison he was quite docile and tractable."

The Ordinary then recommends, in a most earnest manner, that the same improvements should be effected in the women's wing of the prison, and urges the necessity of employing convicted prisoners in some profitable occupation.

THE IRISH ARRESTS.

The "Northern Whig" supplies some information touching the legal proceedings at Belfast against the alleged conspirators:—

"The inquiry into the case of the sixteen prisoners arrested in Belfast on the 5th of December, charged with being members of an illegal society, commenced this day (Friday), at eleven o'clock, in the county jail. It was believed that the authorities had previously determined that the proceedings should be conducted in private, but one of our reporters attended at the jail and was admitted to the board-room, where the investigation was to take place. He was duly accommodated by the officials, but on the arrival of Mr. Tracey, the stipendiary, our reporter was informed that the presence of representatives would not be permitted. Mr. Hamilton, Crown solicitor, conducted the case on the part of Government; Mr. John Rea, solicitor, appeared for the prisoners, but previous to the commencement of the proceedings he addressed them, stating that he was about to withdraw from the inquiry, and gave his reasons for adopting that course. He then handed in to the magistrates (Mr. Tracey, R.M., and Mr. Robert Thomson, J.P.) a written protest against the inquiry on the following grounds:—First, that it was contrary to practice and repugnant to the spirit of the laws of a free country to hold any judicial inquiry in a common jail. Secondly, that it was derogatory to the position of an advocate to discharge his duty in such a place. Thirdly, that he considered his personal safety imperilled in the event of any conflict between him and the Crown in such a situation. Fourthly, that it was unconstitutional to vest the adjudication of such a case solely in the hands of a stipendiary magistrate, and on other grounds. Mr. Rea then withdrew, and the investigation was conducted in strict seclusion. We have ascertained the following particulars:—two of the prisoners have turned approvers. The informer, one of the approvers, was examined, and also Mrs. McKey, in whose house the arrests took place, and her servant. This evidence occupied six hours, at the end of which time the investigation was adjourned until next morning at ten o'clock. It is believed that sufficient has transpired to warrant the commitment of some of the prisoners. The extreme secrecy of the inquiry is regarded with great dissatisfaction in the town. In consequence of Mr. Rea's withdrawal, the confirmations have not yet been furnished, and the prisoners have been entirely undefended."

The police have made some further arrests in Belfast.

THE ST. PANCRAS DEFALCATIONS.—Birchmore, the defaulting tax-collector of St. Pancras, has been apprehended. He had been compelled to return to England, from Hamburg, owing to want of means. Last week, a pathetic appeal was unsuccessfully made by his daughters to the board of guardians to forego their prosecution, as their mother was dying, and hoped to see her wretched husband before she breathed her last. Arnell, the collector, has been found drowned in the Thames. Birchmore has been admitted to bail.

A NARROW ESCAPE.—A down train from Fenchurch Street left that station at five o'clock on Saturday evening. Near the Caledonian Road station are some cattle-lairs. Just as the train had arrived at this point, a heifer escaped and made its way down the line towards the Camden station. The animal was soon overtaken by the train, which dashed it to the ground, and cut it to pieces. The engine and tender was thrown off the line, and although the steam had been shut off, it dashed along some forty or fifty yards, and then plunged down the embankment some sixteen or seventeen feet, followed by two of the carriages, and became deeply imbedded in the earth. Both carriages contained a few passengers, several of whom were much bruised, but, wonderful to tell, nobody was killed. Yet the engine and tender were so deeply imbedded in the earth, that it was not until about four o'clock in the next afternoon, that, with the aid of two powerful engines, it was got up on to a siding.

THE CASE OF MR. CAPRON AND MR. MOWBRAY MORRIS.—At the conclusion of the trial of this case at the Middlesex Sessions, on Thursday, the 23rd ult., resulting in the conviction of Mr. Capron for an assault of an aggravated nature on Mr. Mowbray Morris, and a sentence of three weeks' imprisonment and a fine of £50, Mr. Montague Chambers, the counsel for Mr. Capron, appealed to the Bench of Magistrates that Mr. Capron might be allowed the same privilege as granted to first-class misdemeanants in the Queen's prison. The Chairman stated they had no such regulation in the prison, but there would be no hard labour, and that every convenience, consistent with the regulations of the visiting justices of the prison (Westminster Bridewell), would be afforded. It was then proposed to memorialise the Secretary of State, with the consent of the Court, to remove Mr. Capron to the Queen's prison, as was done in the case of Mr. Auchmuty Glover, convicted at the Central Criminal Court of misdemeanour; but, owing to the absence from town of Mr. Walpole, and the shortness of the term of imprisonment, the three weeks commencing from the Monday, the first day of the session, that course, under advice, was abandoned, and on Saturday next the term of imprisonment will expire, when Mr. Capron will be discharged. The fine of £50 has been paid, and the recognisances entered into.

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ILLUSTRATED TIMES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1859.

THE INDIAN NEWS.

WHAT we hear by the mails from the East confirms us in our
belief that British victory there is certain, but will be slow.
Lord Clyde had completed the first part of his campaign with
signal success, and was established at Lucknow. Several
engagements (besides that in which he commanded) had been
fought and won, and the enemy were being driven up into a single
district with the certainty of destruction there. But, on the
other hand, Nena Sahib was making for the Deccan, and Tantia
Topee was chased in vain, so that there is still severe work
before the troops. Bombay, in particular, found its commerce
much disturbed by the still prevailing uncertainty.

Of the various matters which the mail brings, none is more interesting than that descriptive of Lord Clyde's march through Oude, the chronicle of which (we may add), by Mr. Russell, is at least as happy as anything he wrote from the Crimea. The public begins, through the "Times" correspondent, to make a kind of personal acquaintance with the Commander-in-Chief, and to feel for him as his soldiers feel. A wary and yet daring old veteran, of grim determination, but kindly and genial in his own way, too—such is the figure brought before us. He marches steadily on, through plain and river, past fortress, past wood, hastening when haste is necessary, and never at any other time, and fighting only when some thorough good piece of work can be done. On the 24th of November, his troops had marched sixty miles to come up with the great Oude rebel, Beni Mahdo. The enemy when found were 7,000 strong, and partly protected by dense jungle, at Doundhea Kera, near the Ganges. Yet the fighting only lasted half an hour; in the course of which they were pounded by cannon, and driven by the bayonet out of their position, to be chased ten miles by horse and gun. Gratifying as the affair was, it is still more gratifying to know with how little loss it was accompanied. The result of the battle was to clear the course of the Ganges of rebels from source to mouth. Meanwhile, the proclamation had done its work so far, that many landholders and others were submitting in Oude. Not that the natives were kindly disposed towards us; but that, we trust, may come by and by, as they find the faith promised in the proclamation solemnly kept, and measures on foot for the future benefit of the province. Lord Clyde, by the last accounts, remained at Lucknow, watching the minor operations of the detached bodies of his army, and preparing for a heavy blow at the rebels in the district called Byraitch. That blow is the next important event to be looked for in the war.

Nothing but a map will enable the reader to follow the movements of the several officers, each employed in his own share of the campaign; yet each co-operating to one general result desired by their chief. But we must all endeavour to do justice to those men, and to appreciate the fact that they contribute by the minor strokes to the great strokes. Thus, before Lord Clyde's great blow at Beni Mahdo on the 24th, Brigadier Eveleigh had set out from Scinde (which he took on the 9th) and had beaten Beni in an engagement on the 18th. In this way, these gallant men pitch the enemy from one to the other, like a ball, and play the game of strategy as well as they do that of war. While Eveleigh was intercepting Mahdo, and driving him into Lord Clyde's arms, Sir Hope Grant had gone northward, crossed the river Goomtee, and defeated a body of rebels four thousand five hundred strong.

The results of these measures are most important. Forts are everywhere destroyed, and the means of future rebellion cut off. Those who submit, know that they must now obey; those who hold out, are of course confiscated. And wherever the soldier wins his triumph, the civilian follows it up. Posts begin to be possible again; police is organised, revenue is forthcoming. It is a bloody and it is a tedious business, this war; but, once over, the country will be better fitted for improvement and organisation than ever.

That now famous rebel, Tantia Topee, had been giving a good deal of trouble, by the last accounts, in Central India, and was eagerly watched from Bombay. Here, again, it is hopeless to try and make intelligible in print what is not very clear from the best map. We have to take our information from distant correspondents of Bombay papers, themselves writing at second-hand about complicated transactions. What is certain is, that Tantia was making at an immense pace for the South Mahratta regions, in hopes of raising the country in the interest of Nena Sahib's family. The officers pursuing him were Brigadier Parko

and Major Sutherland—the former of whom gave him a beating on the 1st of December, as the latter had a few days before. By the last accounts, he was supposed to be in Guzerat; and it is evident that we shall hear a great deal more of him before he is done with. British troops continued to arrive in India, showing that Government has a full sense of their importance there.

Another notability of Indian war has gone to his rest—Brigadier-General John Jacob, of Scinde—a very remarkable and original man. It is too much the fashion, now-a-days, to underrate personal superiority, and over-rate "systems;" but events like the Indian mutiny bring nature into play again, and everywhere in India things have gone better or worse according as a great or a little man was at their head. Scinde had able men—bore, in fact, still the stamp of Sir Charles Napier upon her—and has prospered accordingly. Of these Jacob was one, a real governing intellect, original in everything he undertook: a man of heart, and energy, and fire of the antique stamp. England will not forget General Jacob; and by and by will learn to recognise men like him better, and save them some of the opposition and the heart-breaking struggles for a fair field of action of which the General, we believe, had much more than his share. Let us respect his memory, and let us profit by his example.

POVERTY AND PAUPERISM.

Poverty and pauperism, in spite of their grammatical analogy, are, practically speaking, two very different things. Pauperism is exemplified by the inhabitants of the workhouse, poverty by the desolate outcasts of the streets. The pauper illustrates only a single phase, and that rather an exceptional one, of actual poverty. He is aged, imbecile, and spirit-broken. He submits, if married, to surrender the solace of his wife's society in return for the union dormitory, and the parish gruel. He adopts meekly the pauper's costume, with its concomitant degradation, and be surrenders at once liberty and hope. We may pity him, but our sympathies are yet reserved for the poor of another class. These are the poor who wander with blistered feet, with garments dropping in tatters, who brave cold, hunger, and illness until they sink exhausted, before they will apply at the inhospitable union grange. For this class is favoured not by parochial officials. When one of such poor, driven by direst necessity, obtains a difficult admission to the "casual ward," it is only to supply the simplest requirements of failing strength. These once obtained, he gathers his rags once more around him, and departs on his life-long journey of misery.

In behalf of such as these, whom pompous guardians and purse-proud overseers love not, public charity has been earnestly called upon for the last few weeks. The "Times," especially, has devoted column after column of leading articles and correspondence to the direction of public attention and charity towards the houseless poor. The "Illustrated Times" has brought the means by which the relief of this numerous class is sought to be effected visually before its purchasers and a still larger number of spectators. The result has been a large amount of contributions to the support of the benevolent institutions, in which, without affording encouragement to vagrancy, a night's food and lodging are afforded to the homeless wanderer. The matter has aroused attention in high quarters. It is at length clearly seen that poverty is widely distinct from pauperism. The question arises—Why should this be? For what are our workhouses erected, our poor rates exacted, our parochial guardians appointed, and our casual wards contrived, if not to supersede the distressing necessity of private charity towards the destitute? The published report of last Saturday's meeting of the "Marylebone Representative Council" may help us to answer the question.

It appears, through the medium of Lord Courtenay, that the Poor-Law Commission has been awakened to the necessity of providing for the houseless poor. A circular proposing the establishment of district asylums for their benefit has been forwarded to the representatives of the metropolitan parishes. This subject was on Saturday last discussed (we cannot say considered) at the meeting of the "Marylebone Representative Council." What may be the correct legal appellation of the body thus grandiloquently designating itself, we cannot pretend to say. The title is, perhaps, unknown to the law, the meeting may have consisted either of the "Marylebone Vestry," or of the "Marylebone Board of Guardians of the Poor," to each sufficiently notorious in itself to render a charge of cognomen at least desirable. The proceedings appear to have commenced by a parochial authority, in evasion of a question as to what had been done with respect to the conveyance of pauper mourners to a cemetery, answering that the subject was a proper one at this season of the year, as "*if poor people who wished to see their friends buried, were allowed to ride outside the hearse*" during the present weather, they might themselves require to be taken to the cemetery next week—of course, at the parish expense. However, nothing was promised to be done, but it was threatened that nothing should be done if any peremptory resolution, based upon the necessity of something being done, should happen to be passed, which accordingly was not done. A capital overture to the subject of the houseless poor! Accordingly, this was the matter next brought up. "I am not aware," said the eloquent orator, speaking of the circular of the Poor-law Board, "*if (he meant "whether") the guardians of Marylebone have as yet taken that subject into consideration.*" Most likely not, it being especially their duty, as guardians of the poor, so to do. "But it would be remembered that it was a similar, if not precisely the same scheme, *as* that brought forward by the Poor-law Board some years ago, and which was repudiated by nearly all the metropolitan parishes." ("Hear-hear!" from the orator's colleagues.) So, hence we learn that the hideous coverings under Adelphi arches, the perishing crowds round workhouse doors, the shivering wretches in doorways, on dunghills in mews, on offal in the markets, are not the result of the inefficiency or carelessness of the Poor-law Board (of "bloated aristocrats," of course), but of parochial "repudiation!" This repudiation, then, is "the cause why private charity from one end of the kingdom to the other is taxed—why our hearts are wrung by tales of sorrow and desolation. Not that the misery is inevitable, but that parochial representatives may, to use a strictly parochial phrase, "repudiate" any interference with their own self-government!

The eloquent orator was followed by others of kindred mind. One of them, indeed, proposed to provide arrangements for the reception of "those people denominated 'houseless,'" but then this was distinctly stated to be—not for the sake of "those people," but—"to take the wind out of the sails of the Board." Another, an M.P., bragged of having, on the previous occasion, defeated the proposed measure in Parliament, by throwing it out in committee. "It would bring," said this eminent statesman, "tramps and vagabonds from all parts of the kingdom up to London to be housed and fed." Fancy a poor wretch tramping from Cornwall, Liverpool, or Berwick, to London, for a hunch of bread and a night's shelter at a metropolitan refuge!

But the great hit of the meeting was a single word. There is one word, of five syllables it is true, which, when uttered at any parochial meeting, invariably deprives its parochial auditors of reason. Unfortunately it has no equivalent to act as an antidote. That word is "centralisation." Whenever this is uttered, a parochial meeting at once becomes unanimous in wrong. They do not know what it means; very probably half of them could not even spell it. But at its magic sound they yell "Hear, hear," and vote in a way which makes satirists grin and Christians shudder.

And so it is that the poor are to starve in our streets, save for the exertions of the intellectual, the powerful, and the charitable. To such let us hope the mere influence of a festive season will not be like the season, transitory. The poor we have always with us. Hunger and exposure are no less deadly, in the variations of summer, than in the piercing chills of winter temperature. To the foot-sore, fasting

wanderer, a crust of bread and a sheltered rest are no less needful in July than in January. The public is now daily responding to the call of the journalists. Let it not be forgotten, however, that in London many of these refuges exist. It is not because *his* one has been justly praised by the "Times," or the other illustrated in our own columns, that this or that should be the fashionable recipient of public bounty. To forget the existence of the others would be a chance to starve them, and to render the favourites phlebotomically useless. They are all equally necessary, and equally beneficial in their object and results. May we not, to see the time when, by a better or more *method*, a well-conducted plan of relief for the poor may supersede the unseemly oratory of the vestry-room, and the abominable spectacles on the crowded workhouse pavement, of the poor who are not paupers.

THE NEW HALL OF CONGRESS AT WASHINGTON.

The position of the American Capitol was chosen by the "Father of his Country," whose early experience as a surveyor made him eminently fit to select a site for a city and its most prominent buildings. Washington himself laid the corner-stone of the edifice on the 18th of September, 1793. At the time this was done, and for some years afterwards, the sittings of the National Legislature were held in Independence Hall, Philadelphia. So little money at this time came into the treasury, that the new building proceeded very slowly; and when Congress finally commenced its sessions at Washington, under the administration of the elder Adams, the accommodations were of the plainest kind. Nothing was done to the Capitol for the first fifteen or twenty years after its occupancy by Congress; all building was suspended during the "embargo," "non-intercourse," and "war times," and the building was finally rendered useless in 1812 by the invasion of the British, who destroyed it. As a consequence, several sessions of Congress, after the close of the war in 1812, were held in a building provided by the citizens of Washington.

The restoration of the Capitol was commenced in the year 1815. The style of architecture is Roman-Corinthian, modelled after the example of the Pantheon of the "City of Seven Hills," the proportions originally of the dome and rotunda of the Capitol being identically the same with the ancient example. So precisely was the dome copied from its original, that, like that of the Pantheon, it was left unfinished.

The idea of enlarging the Capitol was first suggested by the constant increase of representatives in the Lower House, and the subject was naturally agitated, but many years elapsed before it was brought officially to the notice of Congress. On the 28th of May, 1818, it was proposed in the Senate that the committees of both Houses act together in maturing a plan of action with regard to the demanded enlargement. Four months afterwards the resolution was submitted and passed, and the committee on public buildings was authorised to invite plans, accompanied by statistics, for the extension of the Capitol, and to allow five hundred dollars for the plan which might be adopted by the joint-committees of both houses. Some thirty or forty designs were submitted, the successful competitor being Mr. C. F. Anderson, of New York city. The superintendence of the work was given to Captain Meigs.

Let us give a short sketch of the outside of this noble hall.

The two wings of the Capitol are alike, each being about one hundred and forty feet front by two hundred and fifty deep, built of white marble. When completed, the total cost will be about five millions of dollars. The hall of the House of Representatives is in the east end of the south wing. It is a rectangle, one hundred and forty feet by ninety-three feet, situate midway between the two sides of the buildings and separated from them by halls and suites of rooms. It is lighted entirely from the ceiling, and rises from the second-floor to the roof. A commodious gallery of sixteen feet wide extends around the four sides of the hall. The wall is divided into eighteen panels of about ten feet high and sixteen wide, intended for fresco paintings representing the most famous passages in American history. There are also three smaller panels behind the Speaker's chair.

The roof is supported by a frame of iron—the ceiling is flat and divided into panels, which are frescoed in the most elaborate style. The ceiling is thirty-six feet high, insufficient, perhaps, for symmetry, but necessary for the purposes of debate, since, had it been raised higher, its properties for the transmission of sound would have been materially impaired.

The Speaker's rostrum is marked with much simplicity and beauty. It is made of Italian marble, with sunk panels, and resting upon a base of variegated Tennessee marble of a reddish hue. It is placed in the centre of the south side of the hall, and consists of two parts. In front of it is a desk sufficiently wide for four clerks. The floor of the Speaker's chair is about three feet above the floor. The desks of the members are arranged in a semi-circle upon a rising platform. Hitherto it was only the Senators who had the luxury of a desk.

"The first impression of the Hall," says an American critic, "is that its gilding, colouring and ornaments are overdone. Nevertheless, the effect is so striking as to almost rise to the magnificent. It must, however, be remembered that everything about it is quite new, and the glare will become toned down by time. On a second visit this apparent gaudiness of decoration becomes softened, and as the design and elaborate details are studied, the more the mind is reconciled to its *tout ensemble*."

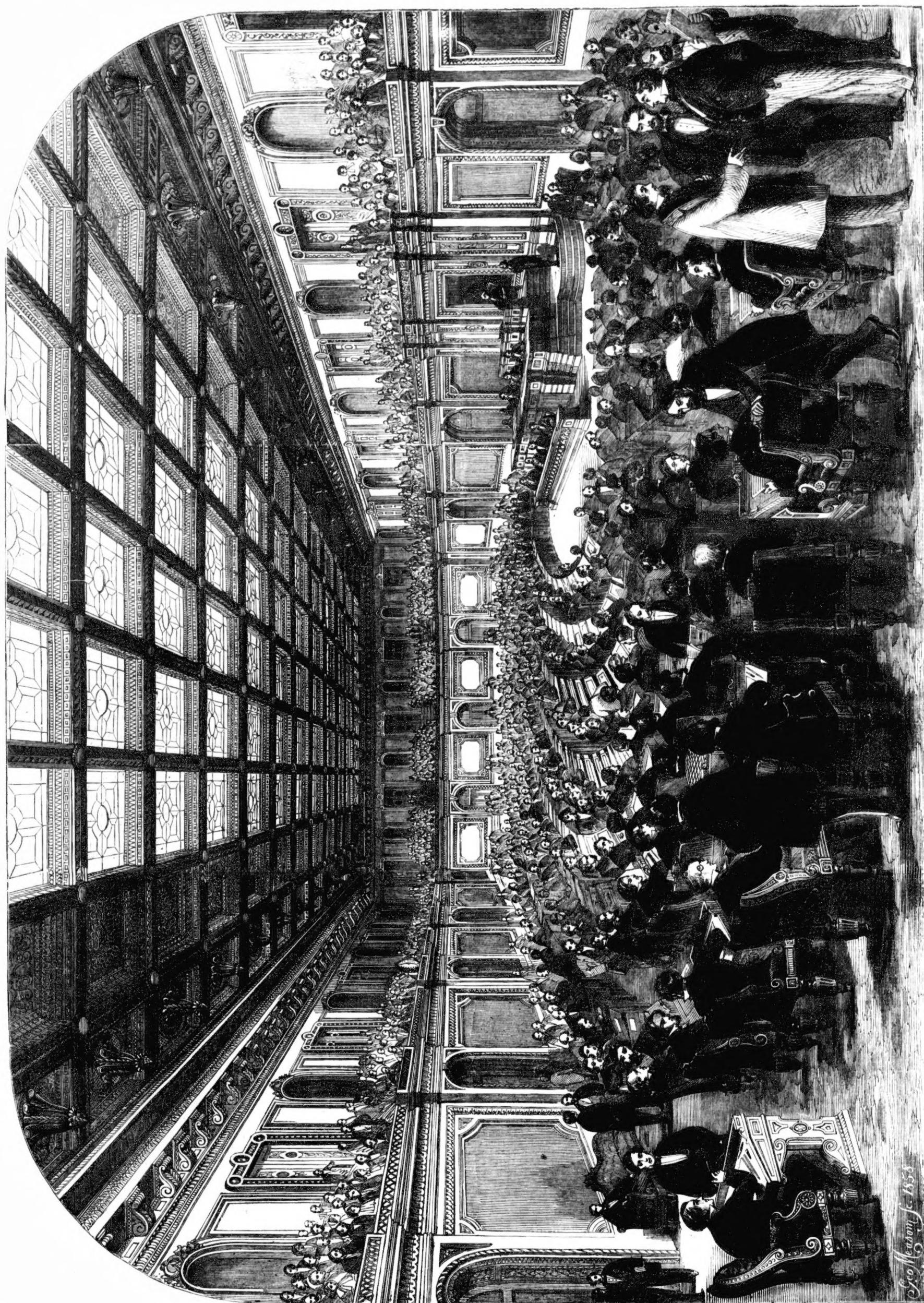
The Hall occupies but a small part of one wing, the remainder being divided into committee-rooms and spacious halls, with rooms for the Speaker and other officers of Congress. There is no wood in the framework of the building, the floors resting on arches of brick. The base boards, as they are called, are marble.

The Capitol now presents a front of 765 feet of marble masonry, and may be considered as one of the most imposing buildings in the world.

It is worthy of remark that the same generation should have seen the building of a new hall of debate for the representatives of free government, the Commons of England and the Representatives of America.

THE COMMISSION appointed to settle the amount of indemnity to be paid by Portugal to France, in the affair of the Charles et Georges, has reported that the proper sum will be 336,000 francs, of which 80,000 francs are to be shared among the crew.

THE BURIAL PIT OF THE SLAIN AT MARSTON MOOR.—The following are extracts from a letter which has appeared in the "Morning Post":—"Without another word of preface, let me, in these days of sanatorial progression, state facts, which are stubborn things!—namely, that the malodorous debris of animal matter, and especially of human bodies, may be subterraneously bottled up and hermetically sealed for more than a couple of centuries in a clay soil and afterwards let loose upon the world. In confirmation whereof, I turn at once to the burial-pits of the slain at Marston Moor. A year ago, with a view to relieve a large waterlogged district, it became pre-eminently necessary to drive a large leading drain at considerable depth through Marston Moor. Instructions were given to avoid, not only the tumuli as indicated in the old maps of the district, but also the legendary localities of sepulture. However, long before the completion of the work, the navvies came upon the Golgotha of the battle-field. There was nothing for it but to go ahead. To make a détour in the drainage either to the right or left would certainly have been "to go further," and probably "to fare worse." I quote from the statement (confirmed by numerous witnesses) of the intelligent foreman of the work:—"We cut twelve yards long and about eight feet wide, through the grave, and found most bodies about four feet from the surface; but I consider that we got to the bottom of it, as we took two 'draws' (diggings) through it after, and the ground below seemed untouched. At one place, bodies, about twenty or twenty-five of them, were laid one over the other in all directions and postures—the forms of many were left in the clay. At this place there was much of a sort of deposit that looked like soot, but damp; the smell at first was intolerable, and could be felt at some distance; it was so bad the men could only work short spells." The skulls had preserved their shape, but crumbled away when exposed to the air. One poor fellow's passport to eternity was picked up by the foreman. He says: "There was a bullet in one skull which dropped out when the skull fell to pieces; the bones, especially the large ones, did not crumble away, but were very brittle when touched with the spade. The teeth were quite perfect, and many of them taken away by the drainers."



HALL OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON

Geo. Meadow Jr. 1858

HER MAJESTY'S BUCKHOUNDS.

In a late number of the "Illustrated Times" (No. 185) we engraved a picture representing "a Royal Hunting Party in the Highlands;" in which engraving the Queen and her Royal children are seen accompanying the Prince Consort to the regions of wild deer. This week we present our readers with another hunting party, infinitely less august,

but scarcely less picturesque. Here we have only the Royal buckhounds, and grooms, and horses, and the dead buck.

But the Queen herself is an Amazon of the gentlest sort, and no follower of hounds; but she keeps up a royal hunting *ménage*, and the Princes her husband and her sons represent her in the field. We are told that the Prince of Wales lately appeared on a beautiful white

pony, presented by his mother on his last birthday, and that he made a capital figure in the hunt.

The Queen's staghounds last met on Friday, at Iver Heath. A field of 150 were present, including a large number from London and Hounslow: the Earl of Carrick, Captain Wynne, Captain Woodgate, Messrs. Ekykyn, Slowker, Sheriff, many of the officers of the 2nd Life Guards



HER MAJESTY'S BUCKHOUNDS.—(FROM A PICTURE BY FREDERICK TAYLER, IN THE ROYAL COLLECTION.)

and Grenadier Guards, &c. The deer "Richmond" on being uncarted on Fulmer Common, ran short to the right through the woods, then to the left over the road to Black Park. The hounds about a quarter of an hour afterwards were laid on in the road outside the park, and went away through Black Park to the Crooked Billet, then back short to the left over the cross roads to the river near Uxbridge, swimming the

canal, and off to the right for Whittington's arm. The hounds here had it all to themselves for nearly two miles, Mr. Davis and the hunt being obliged to cross by the towing-path. Leaving the farm the deer made for Denham, and on to Ickenham and Ruislip, where it was taken after a long run of two hours and a half. Some parts of the run were slow, owing to the water, but those who were well mounted and

could take the brooks and fences, found the pace racing from Ely Park to Uxbridge; the greater part of the field were left at Denham, in consequence of the water.

The deer "Comet," which was hunted for the first time and lost a few weeks since, has not yet been captured, although it has been seen near Upper Halliford.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

HER MAJESTY gave a concert on the evening of New Year's Day to a large and brilliant company. Bennett's new cantata, the "May Queen," was performed, among other pieces.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES FOR ROME, will take place on the 10th or 11th instant. The Prince will be accompanied by Mr. Tarver, his two equerries, and his medical attendant.

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT has, in pursuance of the treaty concluded with the Emperor of China, appointed consuls at Canton and Shanghai. Hitherto it had no agents in the ports of the Celestial Empire. It is likewise about to establish a naval station in China.

PRINCE ALFRED was to have sailed from Malta, it was expected, on the 30th ult., for Tunis, and, after visiting the principal Mediterranean ports, return to England, "preparatory to undertaking the circumnavigation of the globe."

THE EARL OF KENMORE has transmitted to Dr. Moriarty, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Killarney, £1,000 to be distributed among the most needy of the plundered savings'-bank depositors in the town of Killarney.

THE COUNTESS OF NEWRY, who seceded to the Roman communion some seven or eight years since, has returned to the English church.

FOURTY-SEVEN THOUSAND MEDALS have been sent to England by the Turkish Government for distribution to the British army and navy. They are very small, with a ring attached, for facilitating suspension. On the obverse of the medal are three canons and three flags; on the reverse, the name of the Sultan.

A MEETING WAS HELD AT ORTEND a few days since, to discuss the question of forming a gambling establishment in that place. The meeting decided that a petition should be sent to the king, praying for an authorisation to found a gambling-house and conversation-rooms similar to those existing at Spa.

MURRAY CHAMBERS contradicts the statement that he is the author of the "Vestiges of Creation." Some of the proof-sheets were forwarded to him, and it was in that way probably that the rumour originated.

TEMPERANCE seems to be making great progress among the peasantry in Russia. A communication from the Governor of Kowno, in the "Indicateur Economique," states that the peasants of that government took an oath in the church three months ago not to drink brandy for the future; and they have fully kept their promise ever since.

The "New York Herald" states that the Wanderer recently landed eighty first-class negroes between Florida and Georgia, where they readily brought 700 dollars each—making an aggregate of 56,000 dollars.

TWO BOYS WERE KILLED, on Friday week, by an explosion, at Shevington Colliery, near Wigan.

THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER will visit our Court about the month of May, according to the "Court Journal." "Our Queen and his Imperial Majesty are well acquainted, Alexander having visited this country as Cesarovitch a year or two after his father, the late Emperor."

THE CREDITORS OF COLONEL WAUGH have held a meeting to consider the propriety of prosecuting that rather notorious person, and have come to the conclusion that it is not expedient for them to do so, on account of the expense. The official manager of the Eastern Banking Corporation is considered to be the man who should look after the Colonel.

THE UNITED STATES NAVY is composed of 78 vessels, carrying 2,225 guns. Only 25 are steamers, and of these three carry no guns.

A WOMAN DIED IN Islington, last week, who had been regularly in receipt of charitable relief; after her death £1,600 in bank-notes were found in her coal cupboard.

THE DEATH OF THE EARL OF OXFORD causes an accession of the number of Roman Catholic peers, by the succession of his eldest son, Lord Walpole, a convert to the Roman Catholic faith.

LORD PALMERSTON (according to the London correspondent of the Paris "Constitutionnel") has received a severe injury to the knee, and will consequently be unable to resume his place in the House of Commons next session.

DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER (1857) THE NUMBER OF REPORTED WRECKS WAS 230; IN THE MONTH OF JANUARY (1858) THE NUMBER WAS 154; IN FEBRUARY, 162; IN MARCH, 179; IN APRIL, 112; IN MAY, 128; IN JUNE, 102; IN JULY, 101; IN AUGUST, 112; IN SEPTEMBER, 105; IN OCTOBER, 190; AND IN NOVEMBER, 202; MAKING A TOTAL DURING THE PAST YEAR OF 1,887.

THE LIFE-BOATS OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION have attended during the past year upwards of forty wrecks, and saved upwards of one hundred lives. Such an institution should be liberally supported.

NEARLY ELEVEN THOUSAND TURKEYS were despatched from the eastern counties during the Christmas week, to the metropolis, the greater part coming from Norfolk, and being placed on the railway at Norwich.

AS MADAME RISTORI was last week about to leave Florence for Naples, to fulfil an engagement for a month, she was told, by the Neapolitan Chargé d'Affaires that his Government had interdicted her from entering the kingdom.

WILLIAM CANLEY, manufacturer of Stockport, who some time since absconded from that town with property to the amount of £4,000, and against whom a writ in bankruptcy has been issued, was apprehended in Birkenhead on Monday, and taken in custody to Manchester.

DR. WILLIAM ENGLEDE, of Gloucester House, Southsea, a physician of considerable eminence, and editor of the "Zoist," committed suicide on Friday week, by swallowing a dose of prussic acid.

THE REV. THOMAS DALE has intimated to his parishioners his intention of very shortly resigning the vicarage of St. Pancras. The living, which is worth about £1,800 a year, is in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's.

ON NEW YEAR'S-EVE, the enfans de troupe of the 1st Grenadiers of the Guard, in which regiment the Prince Imperial is incorporated, went to the Tuilleries and had the honour of being presented to the young Prince.

THE BISHOP OF RAAB, in Austria, has directed the clergy of his diocese not to "church" Roman Catholic women who are married to Protestants, unless their children are brought up as Catholics.

THE WORKING OF THE ELECTRIC CABLE between Malta and Cagliari has been interrupted by a violent hurricane.

BARTH PENNEFATHER at last appears to have really resigned his seat on the Irish bench. The Solicitor-General is named as his successor.

THE FARMERS are manifesting indications of a disposition to renew their agitation for the repeal of the hop-duty. At Faversham and Ashford meetings have been held.

LODGE AND LADY STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE have arrived in Rome from Naples, where they were so long delayed by her Ladyship's indisposition. No interview whatever took place between his Lordship and the King, although many indirect civilities were paid by his Majesty to Lord Stratford during his stay.

THE YOUNG IRISHWOMAN who was recently arrested for writing seditious letters has been discharged. There was no proof against her, in the first place; and in the second, she appears to be deranged.

BISHOP MELCHIOR seems to have been murdered by the Cochinchinese in the most barbarous manner. His hands and feet were first hacked off, then he was decapitated, and finally disembowelled. His head was exposed at Nain-kung for several days, and then broken in pieces, and cast into the sea.

MR. CARDWELL AND MR. LANGSTON, the two members for Oxford, have addressed their constituents. Both spoke strongly in favour of a satisfactory measure of reform, but, like most of the latter-day orators on this subject, did not attempt any very intelligible definition of what they meant.

MR. TOWNSEND, late M.P., appeared at the Literary Institution, Greenwich, one day last week, and recited the play of "Othello" entirely from memory.

THE COUNTESS OF EGLINTOUN recently presented colours to the 2nd battalion of the 14th Regiment of Foot in the presence of the Lord-Lieutenant.

A PIPE AND A PISTOL that once belonged to Miles Standish, the hero of Longfellow's lost poem, were sold at Albany (U.S.) lately. They were each bought for fifteen dollars.

THE KING AND QUEEN OF PRUSSIA, with their numerous suite, have taken up their residence at the Caffarelli Palace on the Capitol at Rome, usually occupied by the Prussian Embassy.

HEAVY RAINS have been very general in France lately. The Rhone, the Saône, and the Seine, have all risen to an alarming height.

FROM A MEMOIR OF THE LATE DR. SNOW, in the "Medical Times," it appears that chloroform was administered to her Majesty at the birth of the Prince Leopold and the Princess Beatrice.

FATAL FIRE.—A fire occurred last week on the premises of Wrench, a candle-dresser, in White Cross Street. After the house had been gutted, three dead bodies were found; Mrs. Wrench, who was sitting on a box in the front room, with her arm fairly out of the window; her child, Eliza, aged seven months; and the eldest boy, Charles, aged nine years.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

WEDNESDAY evening saw hundreds upon hundreds crushing into St. James's Hall. Mr. Barnum, the well-known American showman, was to lecture at night; to lecture on the "Art of Making-Money." A good lesson to learn this—a taking topic. Who came to hear it? Men of all classes, many respectable-looking fathers of families brought their wives and daughters, "swells" crushed into the stalls, Mincing Lane and Throgmorton Street were represented in the two-shilling seats, idlers of every sort and description throughout the gallery, while the initiated chuckled at seeing many representatives of literature and journalism immediately beneath the lecturer. I cannot say that I came away impressed with any more notions of money-making than had taken in with me; I knew that it was proper that I should keep account of what I earn and spend—I religiously commence this operation on the first day of every January, and as religiously abandon it on the third; I knew that I ought not to lend money, but I do; and I knew that I ought not to back bills, and I don't; I knew that the "auri sacra fames" was universal, and that while we are constantly decrying the acquisition of property, we are constantly striving to acquire it. But I did not know, or think of, the anecdotes which Mr. Barnum related, in a very quaint and humorous manner; I did not know the success which Mr. Bonner's system of advertising had established for the "New York Ledger;" I did not know the histories of the mermaid, and the American museum, and the ploughing elephants, and the wild buffalo hunt, which Mr. Barnum narrated, and I freely own I was immensely amused. If my morals were not improved, most certainly they were not harmed, and I had a very pleasant evening, and a vast amount of amusement for my three shillings.

A contemporary (weekly) announces with a flourish (of trumpets?) the culmination of the efforts of the promoters to establish an exhibition in 'sixty-one! It is a fact! What think you of that, Mr. Wentworth Duke (of the Society of Arts)? What think you, Mr. J. C. Beane (of the Dublin and Manchester Exhibitions)? Statistically, and by the aid of figures (Arabic numerals, in fact), it is proved that the undertaking must be a success! We have the authority of a great chronicler and annotator for the announcement. In the year 1851, there was an Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations in Hyde Park, of which Prince Albert was the presiding genius. It was successful, it was pulled down || and it is now proposed to establish another! somewhere in the neighbourhood, which is actually on the way to Hammersmith, Richmond, and Twickenham—Twickenham, where Pope—Pope Alexander, as he was sometimes sportively called by the ladies of Maledrum ("the fair-haired Martha and Teresa brown")—where Pope lived!** The fact of this is enough to establish the success of the attempt in the eyes of —.†† But, truth to tell, I should think but few others will entertain the same idea. The Exhibition of '51 was a glorious success—has any succeeding imitation proved augt but a distinct failure? The Dublin did not succeed, the Paris relied upon its *beau art* rather than on its industrial show; and to attempt to *rechauffer* the spirit of '51 among our manufacturing classes, depressed since then by two heavy wars and a commercial crisis, would signal fail. Let us weigh all *pros* and *cons* properly in the balance, but don't let us imperil our hard-earned glories, and render ourselves liable to the ridicule of foreign nations, for the glorification of a few hot-headed enthusiasts who have their own interests first at heart.

I suppose that the sad accident at the Victoria Theatre had great effect on the nervous and timid, for such a bad Boxing-week as the last has not been experienced for years by theatrical managers. For the last three nights of the week none of the houses were more than half filled. I have now been enabled to make a round of the various entertainments, and I do not think they are up to the average. The burlesques are much less funny, and far more slangy, than they were; I have found this in every instance, and have felt it so acutely, that I have actually burst into verse, and addressed the following stanzas to James Robinson Planché, Esq., whilome Dramatic Author, but now Rouge-Croix Pursuivant at Arms!

Mr. Planché! I entreat you, sir! give up the Herald's College, "Leave Blue-mantle and Clarendon to fudge heraldic lore, To vamp armorial bearings, and to scatter spurious knowledge Of rampants and of couchants, of sable, gules, and or."

Cut your curt-hose! put on pegtops! doff your breast-emblazoned tabard!

Drop the trumpet! seize the pen which you have never plied in vain! For the bright sword of your wit is growing rusty in its scabbard, And we long to see it gleaming in the gas-lamps once again!

We remember how it rattled in the joints of Humbug's armour, Mowed down Conventionality, laid Cant and Error low, In the hands of Miss P. Horton, or of some such *piquante* charmer, How deftly every cut was dealt, how masterly each blow!

But your mantle, Mr. Planché, has on none of those descended, Who in this present Christmas-tide pretend to do your work; And as to your Excalibur, the least said soonest mended, For in its stead your followers wield a feeble little dirk!

I mean—to give up metaphor—that where an illustration Of your's would ring with Attic wit and pungent repartee, They put their Webster's dictionary through a long gyration, And leave us finally in doubt as to what their aim may be!

With slang they eram their dialogue—and slang is not amusing; No gentle lady's tongue should talk of "going it like bricks!" "Old Cove" is a term which I don't like to hear an actress using, Nor is coin most pleasantly described as "a Joey and three kicks!"

There's of pawnbrokers and gin-shops no denying the existence, Of madness, "social evil," and many an ugly sore, But surely it were best to keep these matters at a distance, And not in wives and sisters' eyes to drag them to the fore!

Then, Mr. Planché, come once more! and doff your herald's tabard, Drop the trumpet, seize the pen which you have never plied in vain! For the bright sword of your wit is growing rusty in its scabbard, And we long to see it flashing in the gas-lamps once again!

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

THE MAGAZINES.

We say, and say with truth and justice, that the days of the magazines are past. I believe that scarcely any one looks out for them now; they are read because they are found on the tables of clubs and reading societies, and because they are supplied by Mr. Mudie for your annual subscription; but with the exception of occasional serial stories, the matter which they contain is in every way excelled in some of the cheap weekly publications, and we know that we shall eventually meet with the serial story, at its close, in a more compact and readable form. When I say "they," I allude only to "Blackwood," "Fraser," and the "Dublin University," for the other half-a-dozen monthlies are surely beyond the pale of criticism, filled as they are with the productions of unknown writers, content to exchange their plagiarised notions for the *renom* to be reaped from a few advertisements of their names in the newspapers, and with the intellectual dregs of one or two writers, who, by some extraordinary caprice of public opinion, at one time attained a certain degree of popularity. If I were ever compelled to purchase one of the three periodicals I have named (the which Heaven forefend!) I think I would choose "Fraser!" And for these reasons: There is in "Fraser" a larger number and a greater variety of subjects treated, and the treatment is more English, newer, and, to use a vulgarism, more "up to the time of day" than in any of the others. It possesses not the biting wit of "Maga" contributed by Ayton, nor the buoyant spirits of Lever and graceful verse of Waller, which adorn the "Dublin;" but, truth to be told, "Maga"

* Cunningham. † Cunningham. ‡ Cunningham. § Cunningham. || Cunningham. ¶ Cunningham. ** Cunningham. *** Cunningham. †† Cunningham.

is generally a great deal too Scotch for us benighted Southrons. The Edinburgh George Street circle patronises us to an extent, and occasionally its members chuckle among themselves in uncouth Gaelic at their immeasurable superiority to their English readers. Ever since the late Professor Wilson was permitted in a jaw-breaking and unknown tongue to bespatter with abuse, culled from the kennel and the lazar-house, English literary gentlemen, an idea of their literary superiority has been prevalent among Scotch writers. Besides, when we come to reflect, the fun of "Blackwood" is a very serious matter, very *rocco*, very abstruse, perfectly Cruikshankian in its allusions to past subjects for jest. The "Dublin," too, is too essentially national to be greatly interesting to its readers on this side the Channel; and therefore again I give the preference to FRASER.

Which begins the new year and the new volume admirably. First and foremost are four chapters of a tale called "Holmby House," by W. G. J. Whyte Melville, an author whom I affect not at all. He is your "rattie," your semi-fast man, your tea-table Lever, your ankle-showing and horsy-talking girl describer, your tenth-rate Hamley, and author of "Guy Livingstone," without the spirit of the one or anything like the talent and reading of the other. Here in his very first chapter, which has nothing to do with the rest of the story, and reads like (and most probably was intended for) a sporting episode in something else, a description of a hunt, he tries to create a spurious interest by representing himself as an old gentleman wearing "flannel bandages and fleecy hosiery," instead of "boots and breeches," and by giving a "Bell's Life" correspondent-like account of a run with the Pytchley hounds. The second paper, "Concerning the Art of Putting Things," showing that trifles make up the sum of human life, and how the mere manner in which they are represented, or misinterpreted, influences their future, is a sound and admirable exposition of worldly philosophy, written in a thorough spirit of appreciation; all the illustrations adduced are pointed and excellent. Further on we come to the first part of "Schloss Eishausen," a German mystery, rather heavy but closely written; and to a review of Homer and the Homeric age, by the Rev. Bartham Zincke, which, being hopelessly beyond my conception, I shall not attempt to give any opinion upon. Two more articles in "Fraser" are specially worth reading: one on "Furniture Books," where the delights of a well-stored library, in contradistinction to the farago of handsomely-printed and well-bound nonsense, provided by an upholsterer to whom an "order" has been given, is capitally descended upon. By the way, in the list of Charles Lamb's "books which are no books," the writer unaccountably omitted the "draught-boards, bound and lettered at the back," the gem of the series. In the library of one of the greatest writers of these or any other times, is a sliding door, the shelves of which are fitted up with sham books, to tally with the rest of the book furniture lining the room, and it is worth a twenty miles' walk to read the titles which the laughter-loving humourist has had inscribed on these dummies. The theme of the "Fraser" essayist is, however, the illustrated books on all subjects, chiefly sacred and profane poetry, which are published at this time of year, and these are lashed with unsparing hand. See, for instance, what the writer says of Mr. John Gilbert and his publishers:

"The same gentleman adds a few trial, and that a severe one, to Job, by filling the pages of his book with caricatures, done to order, of every man, animal, and thing referred to in that grandest of all poems. Not content with defacing these master-pieces with his own exclusive hand, this modest artist's mark is to be found in nearly every other illustrated book of the season. The long results of thought, and suffering, and knowledge embodied in perfect language by genius, to which the world looks up with awe, are dealt with as if they were the miseries of 'Punch,' or the waggery of Bon Gaultier. And respectable publishers are found to scatter such profanities abroad upon the world, and critics to caulk the ignorant as surances that kindred genius has added a fresh charm to that which needed none!"

The other article to which I would call attention is entitled "Hints to Vagabonds," by one of themselves, and contains a description of Holland, written with an appreciation, truth, and drollery, which will be appreciated by all old travellers.

BLACKWOOD is rather heavy. The many-initiated baronet closes his "What will he do with it?" and there are two travel articles, one on "Burma and the Burmese," compiled from Captain Yule's "Mission to the Court of Ava," the other, the second instalment of "A Cruise in Japanese Waters." The first portion of this Japanese article is as pleasant as its previous part promised. We have a capital picture of Nagasaki, of its native inhabitants and Dutch and Russian settlers. The ingenuity of the men in handicraft, and their pluck and activity as sailors, is highly extolled; while in his description of the ravishing beauty and the pleasant manners of the Japanese girls, the writer renders himself responsible for an enormous amount of immigration of western bachelors, which will doubtless ensue. "How to Boil Peas," a title four'd on old Peter Pindar's fable of the pilgrim, is a kindred article to the "Art of Putting Things," which I have already noticed in "Fraser," and shows us how, by adapting ourselves to circumstances, we may take the rough edge off most of our annoyances. A paper on the "Periodical Press" is earnest, and takes the right view of a most question; and some verses, "The Field of Towton Moor," may be very well, but I have an objection to such rhymes as "beating" and "settling," "furrow" and "morrow," and specially the time-honoured National Anthem jingle of "victorious" and "o'er us."

The NATIONAL MAGAZINE contains the average number of good engravings and the average amount of average letterpress. Decidedly above the average are the contributions of Messrs. Robert Brough and H. S. Edwards, but the others are sadly prosaic. The "Recollections of a Police Officer," or some such title, have been extensively advertised, and the proprietors of the "Magazine" have sung triumphal paens at securing the services of the author for a second series. The specimen given this month is of the regular old magazine stamp, and singularly unnatural. I never yet met a policeman who quoted "Magna est veritas," or a French lady who said, "On m'estrangler."

It is impossible to be angry with the conductors of the AMATEUR'S MAGAZINE, they are so good-humoured and ladylike, and, indeed, this new number is a great improvement on its predecessor. "Bob Summer's Day at the Lee," is quite equal to many stories which I have seen in "Bentley," and some verses, "A New Year's Hymn," are beyond the average. But why not cut conventionality? I'm sure no one ever met in society persons called, "Papa Jollyboy," or "Dr. Omnia Novit."

THE EXECUTORS OF THE WILL OF BÉRANGER have published an advertisement, by which they invite all those who have received letters from the late poet, to co-operate in the publication of a complete edition of the "Correspondence de Béranger." All contributions are to be addressed to M. Perrotin, 41, Rue Fontaine, Molière.

OXFORD MIDDLE CLASSE EXAMINATIONS.—The first report of the Delegacy appointed to conduct the examination of candidates not members of the University has been presented to Convocation. If the examination be taken as a whole (say the delegates) and the peculiar circumstances attending a first experiment fairly considered, there is certainly just ground for saying that a good many of the candidates showed proofs of having been extremely well taught. The papers of the rest gave the impression of hard work, considerable intelligence, not much cultivation, and a singular want of purpose. There was often a tolerably wide range of information, and sometimes no small amount of original thought; but candidates who showed both these frequently showed little power of putting their information together, and still less power of expressing it in clear language. There seemed to be in many instances all the materials of a good education, but not the form. There is reason to hope that the attempt to prepare for definite examinations will gradually lead to improvement in this respect. The experience of a single year would hardly justify the delegacy in suggesting correctives which the schoolmaster might advantageously adopt. The industry which the whole plainly proves is a foundation on which anything whatever may be safely built. What is most wanted at present is close attention to the subjects included under the preliminary examination. The delegates conclude their report by expressing their opinion that the experience of this year has justified, as far as so short an experience could, the passing of the statute. The number of candidates proves that the schools are glad of the aid; and the character of the work gives promise that the aid will not be thrown away.

Literature.

Alma Mater. By MEGATHYME SPLENE, B.A., Oxon.
London : Hogg and Son.

This is a collection of letters addressed to the freshmen and dons of Oxford, by a gentleman who has studied and graduated at that university, and who takes the trouble to impress upon his readers that he has no personal reasons for detesting it. Be that as it may, Megathyme Splene, B.A., certainly holds Oxford and Oxoniens in utter abhorrence; nor has he a much better opinion of Cambridge, nor, indeed, of any of our English universities. Doubtless there is some truth in what Megathyme Splene writes. Probably there is a certain amount of veracity contained in every statement he makes, but on the whole, we look upon his book as untrue, unjust, and unjustifiable. The author confesses that the University of Oxford, from which he held a scholarship, treated him very handsomely. But he has also been a member of the universities of London, Bonn, and Munich, and after indulging in "profound reflection" for several years, and "studying the subject" for seven months (which, we suppose, means writing the book) he has come to the conclusion that German students are less immoral than English undergraduates, that German dons, if more pedantic, are more narrow-minded, and above all less drunken than ours. Indeed, the Oxford dons, according to Megathyme Splene, are not only frequently drunk, but are scarcely ever sober. At Oxford *delirium tremens* is as common all the year round as coughs are in winter. The masters, moreover, are grossly ignorant. Candidates for honours know scarcely anything, and their examiners next to nothing. Professors of high reputation for classical learning, are unable to construe Virgil, and if they have to direct an examination in the *Aeneid* they are unable to get on without the assistance of a dictionary and a crib. Of course, too, they are unable to scan, and they would perpetually be guilty of false quantities, but for their ingenious system of marking the longs and the shorts in red ink. Sometimes crib, dictionary, and red ink fail them alike. Then there is nothing for the examiner to do but to take off his spectacles (it is essential that an examiner should wear spectacles), rub his eyes, and pretend that defective sight and not defective knowledge has prevented him from getting at the meaning of some exceedingly simple Latin sentence. But if every one at Oxford is ignorant, who makes the cribs, who compiles the dictionaries, who marks the quantities in red ink? Megathyme Splene proves too much. Such vice, such dulness, such sensuality, such thorough blackguardism, as he represents to exist in Oxford, are to be found in no university in the world. No body of English gentlemen, or of Englishmen in any class of life, ever behaved with the coarseness and meanness which seems to have characterised nearly all Mr. Splene's friends at Oxford. In "Semperit" College he informs us there was "not one Fellow—not one—who for tact, delicacy, good-breeding, and honour, I could have introduced with pleasure to my family; and as for marrying my sisters, why, I should have you doing what a well-known character among you once did—he became engaged to a beautiful, credulous girl, when he had nothing to offer, kept it on for five years, and one day quietly wrote to say that he must break it off, for no reason under the sun."

In the "Letter to the dons," from which we have just quoted, Mr. Splene is splenetic to a most extravagant extent. "It is not true," he says to them, "that you are *all* prigs and pedants. There are a good many who don't know enough to be so, and a very few who know much." Then he adds: "It is not true that you are *all* partial and unjust. Among two hundred men it is impossible there should not be one *Lot*—not one just man—though it was not *my* lot to meet with him." Is the last sentence written for the sake of introducing the wonderful *jeu de mots* on "Lot" and "lot?" or does the author really mean what he says? The former supposition appears to us the more probable.

It is not merely the abuses traceable to the monastic origin of the two great universities that Mr. Splene condemns, for he objects almost as much to the University of London. But he dislikes Oxford exceedingly; and, disliking it, there is nothing too bad for him to say of it. On the other hand, he has a vast admiration for the German universities, and seems to have a regard for the very absurdities and stupidities of which most of the students are guilty at times. Mr. Splene writes interestingly and vigorously, though occasionally his wholesome calumny is quite nauseating. But his account of the ordinary life of a German professor will be read with pleasure by everybody (except, perhaps, by an Oxford don); and it is certain that the book evinces great literary talent. At the same time, no one will believe in his general charges against our universities, which are directed not so much against their organisation as against all the students and all the lecturers, considered as gentlemen and as men. Those who do not know Oxford, at all events know numerous great and good men who have been educated there. We have statesmen, judges, and divines, who have studied at Oxford, and who certainly need fear no comparison with the German officials who have passed a few years of their youth at Heidelberg or Bonn. The German universities doubtless produce professors of vast learning and industry; but they produce nothing else. Whether this be the fault of the country itself rather than of its university system, we cannot determine; but it is quite clear, as regards Oxford, that if it were nearly as bad as Mr. Splene represents it to be, it could not have sent out nearly so many good men.

Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life. By EDWARD FITZBALL, Esq. London : Newby.

LIVES of thieves and pirates are always successful, and the career of an English dramatist ought to be as interesting, if properly described, as that of any other robber. When we saw "Thirty-five Years of the Life of a Dramatic Author" advertised, and, moreover, read that it was by the author of the "Crown Diamonds," we made sure that some of our Planchés and Mortons were at length ashamed of themselves, and had confessed their misdoings in two volumes octavo. But the English author of the "Crown Diamonds" (which, it will be remembered, had been written some years before by M. Scribe) is as hard upon the translators of French pieces as a man who had never adapted the smallest vaudville in his life. It is true that Mr. Fitzball has written some original pieces, but numbers of those which he claims as his own are borrowed from foreign sources. At the same time, he must have the credit of having done his best to produce pieces of his own invention—which cannot be said of many of our dramatists. Indeed, there can be no doubt but that Mr. Fitzball loves the drama truly and passionately; but to love is one thing, to benefit another. It is amusing to see how, throughout his two volumes, of three or four hundred pages each, he takes it for granted that he is—not a mere "dramaturge," or writer of stage-plays—but a genuine dramatic poet. We never expect an author to speak of his own verse, however bad, as "my dogrel;" but, even if it be tolerably good, he hesitates before calling it "my poetry." Mr. Fitzball, when writing or translating a libretto at Peckham, seems to fancy that he is on the summit of Olympus, and that his name is not Fitzball but Apollo. It is curious too to notice how the librettist evidently regards himself as the author not only of the words but also of the music of the operas on which he has been engaged, to say nothing of the principal singers who appear in the work, and whom he seems to look upon as his own personal property. "Balfe," we are told, "played in 'Joan of Arc' himself; he was a baritone [is not the composer of 'Satanella' still living?], and sang with great feeling, as well as taste and finish. Then I had Templeton, Anderson, Giubilei, Seguin, Miss Romer, Mrs. Anderson, and Miss Poole." In another place, too, we find "Fitz" (as his friends appear to style him) complaining that he is not sufficiently appreciated as the author of "When I behold the anchor fall," "My pretty Jane," and "Yes, let me like a soldier fall." As regards the last-named production, we think Mr. Vincent Wallace would do well to let the writer of the words take the credit of the affair altogether: for, though the music has enjoyed a certain popularity, it is as thoroughly common-place as can well be conceived.

We must do Mr. Fitzball the justice to admit, that, although an enthusiastic admirer of his own muse, he has also a kind word for everybody else, especially if the gentleman who receives the muse's visits happens to be an intimate friend. Thus we read that a certain poetical "rose-bush," the production of Captain Polhill, the manager of Drury Lane Theatre, had to be "trimmed" by Mr. Fitzball, who, in his usual rich metaphorical style, terms himself "the head-gardener to the establishment." The head-gardener goes on to inform us, that "it required a very delicate and fine-edged pair of shears not to touch the buds, of which there were many very beautiful and full of fragrance." It appears that "some lines about a fountain in particular were lovely." After the trimming operation had been performed, De Pinna (who seems to have been a wag) remarked that it was "as if the hand of an enchanter had passed over the work," for that "everything was gone and yet nothing lost." Soon afterwards the wielder of the theatrical pruning-knife had to operate upon a "very pretty opera" called the "Fairy Oak." It must have been a very pretty opera indeed when it left Mr. Fitzball's hands, for out of the twenty-five scenes which constituted the original work, as many as twenty-two were cut out.

We have said that Mr. Fitzball is eminently a good-natured man. He likes the composer whom he supplies with "poetry," the manager who produces the piece, and the artists who appear in it. Of Madame Albertazzi, who sang in our author's "Ninetta," he says—"Her voice was unsurpassable, and, what is more, I believe it was English. But that sweet voice has long since been hushed in death, and is, doubtless, now attuning itself with angels. Poor, lovely Albertazzi died very young—after a brief career—like bird that sings sweetly beneath our lattice, then takes flight to more sunny regions, and by us is heard no more." These lyric passages occur constantly in Mr. Fitzball's work, and seldom fail to amuse.

Our readers are aware that Mr. Fitzball has written in almost every dramatic style known, to say nothing of one or two that were certainly not known until he introduced them. It is interesting, then, to inquire which style he is inclined to give his preference to. In one part of the book he seems to be of opinion that the highest work of which the human intellect is capable, is the production of a good horse-drama; and there is really some show of reason in his assertion, that when an author succeeds at Astley's, he displays greater dramatic (for which read "theatrical") skill than when writing at the national houses; for a very palpable reason, "he has neither the assistance of high music nor high poetry, and has, moreover, to shape his histrionic abilities (*sic*) to the footsteps of horses, in many instances the more comprehending actors." But if there be some sense in the remark we have quoted, in what loose and inaccurate language it is conveyed! Two pages further we are told that some Astley piece ran "upwards, if not more, than one hundred nights;" indeed the book, while full of good feeling, is equally replete with bad English and bad taste. For the bad English and bad spelling, there is no excuse; they are defects which cannot be overlooked even in a dramatic author of thirty-five years' experience. As to the florid bombastic style in which Mr. Fitzball writes whenever he wishes to be exceedingly impressive (that is to say, about every other page of his book), that is the natural and inevitable result of his long connection with what is called the minor drama. Whether he learns the art of keeping himself in a state of perpetual inflation at his playhouses, or whether he was born with that gift, we cannot, of course, determine; but no one could do the work Mr. Fitzball has been doing for the last thirty-five years and preserve the faculty of writing simply and naturally, whatever his endowments might have been originally. Mr. Fitzball (like some of his betters, in this respect) seems to believe that there is one vocabulary for prose and another for verse. He also delights in inversions, and, in fact, has all the vices of the regular Surrey and Victoria dramatists. Instead of "I heard two persons conversing," he would say (and does say, in "Maritana"), "Heard I two voices in converse speak," and even in these memoirs he seldom writes a sentence which is not remarkable either for affectation or absurdity—and frequently, at the same time, for bad grammar. Here is an excellent specimen of the ludicrously absurd style into which the author sometimes falls:—

"The representative of Marmon, a very handsome young man, full of vigour and life, and a splendid rider, was poor Crouther. I say poor Crouther, because eventually he proved so unfortunate. He married Miss Vincent, the popular manageress of the Victoria Theatre—that popular heroine of the domestic drama, as she was justly called."

Now, if we did not know Mr. Fitzball, and Mr. Fitzball's style of writing, we might fancy that he was indulging in a humorous sarcasm at the expense of the Victoria manageress. But no; he never raises a laugh at any one except himself; and we learn, about a page further on, that the misfortune of poor Crouther consisted not in getting married to Miss Vincent, but in going mad in the church almost before the service was concluded. "I say, poor Crouther, because, eventually, he proved so unfortunate. He married Miss Vincent," &c., reminds us of a Victoria drama, written, probably, by Mr. Fitzball himself, in which the heroine exclaims to an admirer who already wears the matrimonial fetters, but endeavours to conceal them: "Wretch! I learn that you are a married man; and I suspect that your friend there is no better."

With all its absurdities, there are some good anecdotes to be found in the "Thirty-five years of a Dramatic Author's Life"; but the fatuity, the candid vanity, the unutterable affectation of the author, are what the reader principally remembers after laying the book down. He assures us that he is a very diffident and retiring person, and we believe him, though, at the same time, he loves praise. Nearly all vain men are amiable, because what they principally value is the good opinion of others. Mr. Fitzball, however, appears to be more than usually good-natured; and his foolishness and vanity almost surpass belief.

Proverbs with Pictures. By CHARLES H. BENNETT. London : Chapman and Hall.

In this volume Mr. Bennett illustrates about three hundred popular sayings; sometimes exemplifying their true meaning in a humorous manner, at others intensifying it, but, for the most part, giving his proverbs a new and unexpected significance, which generally makes us laugh, and occasionally causes us to think. In "A drowning man catches at a straw," we see a hapless creditor struggling in the water, while from the overhanging bank a Hebrew bill-discounter extends a fishing-rod and line, of which the tempting bait is a slip of paper bearing the magic words, "I promise to pay." "Time tries all," shows us Old Time making experiments with alcoholic drinks of every kind. "The grapes are sour," represents a teetotal fox looking up with envious eyes at the sign of the Grapes Tavern. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" has suggested to Mr. Bennett a countryman running away with a fat goose, while far above him, at the top of a tree, are two insignificant little black-birds. "Every Jack must have his Gill," is a pike with a noggan of gin in his hand. "By hook or by crook" is one of the best proverb-pictures in the book. Fishing in the glass of time, we see Lucifer on one side, who is actively employed with a thin delicate line and an almost invisible hook, while on the other sits a fat bishop, whose pastoral crook seems to be of no sort of use to him. There is one fault in some of Mr. Bennett's pictures which is worth mentioning, because it can so easily be avoided. Occasionally, then, the artist allows his love of the grotesque to carry him to the confines of the horrible, which, here and there, he actually reaches. We have an instance of this in the hanging scene illustrative of "Fools tie knots and wise men loose them;" and in the picture where an old woman is represented stirring up with an egg-spoon the brains of her oval-faced, addle-pated son. But, taking them altogether, there is a surprising amount of wit and fancy exhibited in these three hundred illustrations of proverbs.

Shakspeare Fresh Chiselled on Stone. By J. V. BARRETT. London : Dean and Son.

MR. BARRETT here gives us a number of well-known passages from Shakspeare, which he illustrates in a novel and humorous manner. The lines from Othello:—

"BRABANTIO. Are they married, think you?

"RODEBIGO. Truly, I think they are!"

have suggested to the artist the representation of a ferocious matronly squabble. In connection with "My sweet mistress weeps when she sees me work," we have a picture of a blundering servant smashing tea-pot and tea-things. But the best design in the volume, is that of the cabman turning up his thumb contemptuously at a crown piece, which is being tendered him, as the legal fare, by the mother of a large family, who must be supposed to have travelled a long distance: "why, then was a crown offered him," (says one of the citizens, in "Julius Caesar"), "and being offered him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus."

The War Tiger; a Tale of the Conquest of China. By WILLIAM DALTON. London : Griffith and Farran.

MR. DALTON is already favourably known to the public as a delineator of Chinese manners and customs. His "Wolf-Boy," though written more particularly for children, has been read with pleasure and advantage by persons of all ages. The author has made China his special study; and the historical, geographical, and social information that he has collected in reference to that country is surprising, especially when we consider that he has never visited it. Of course, one may read a history of China, or examine a Chinese map, or study a work on the manners and customs of the Chinese people. But Mr. Dalton's merit consists in this, that he has made himself so thoroughly familiar with Chinese events, places, and usages, that he can describe the actions, the journeys, and the daily habits of a Chinaman, of no matter what century, as easily and naturally as if he had been dealing with the ordinary life of an Englishman.

Mr. Dalton's second work on China is as interesting, while it is even more instructive than his first. The "War Tiger" is the son of a rich trader, who is the proprietor of a large fleet of merchant vessels, and who appears to be one of the most considerable persons in the Empire. Having discovered that a plot is in existence for dethroning the Emperor (the last of the Ming dynasty), he uses all possible exertions to reach the monarch, and acquaint him with the treachery that is going on within the walls of his own palace. He also rescues the Emperor's daughter from various perils, and, in short, uses his best endeavours to preserve the family in which is vested the right of governing the country, and to save the land itself from the power of the Tartars. The defeat and death of Wey-t-Song, the last of the Mings, is the subject of one of the most interesting chapters in the book. The character of this monarch is well pourtrayed. He appears to have been a weak, vacillating man, but by no means a bad one. Indeed, he was remarkable for his favourable disposition towards Christianity. He permitted the erection of Christian places of worship, and encouraged the labours of the missionaries; though at the same time he underwent the influence of designing courtiers, so far as to depose several governors, who, like himself, were approvers of the new faith. Liking, the bad man of the book, accuses the Christians of being the chief agents in the very conspiracy which he himself has originated, and induces the Emperor to sign an edict commanding that all Christians in his dominions be destroyed. Unfortunately, or fortunately, the treacherous minister tries to prove too much. He produces a chaplet of beads and some reliques which he calls "the mysterious symbols used by the initiated in the great conspiracy." But the Emperor, who has studied the tenets and practices of the Christian (Catholic) religion, understands what these symbols really mean, and thus the immediate design of the chief conspirator is frustrated.

However, what we chiefly admire in the "War Tiger," is not the string of incidents and adventures which the work contains, but the light it throws upon the history and customs of the Chinese nation. The "War Tiger" is a capital book for boys, but it is also a very interesting one for men.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.

A VISIT TO THE NEW FOREST, by Harriett Myrtle (Sampson Low and Son) is an interesting account of an expedition of a party of children, under the guidance of their parents, to that celebrated locality, accompanied by pleasing descriptions and instructive historical associations. Aunt Fanny, who acts as cicero to the young people, of course points out to them the celebrated oak which diverted the course of Sir Walter Tyrell's arrow, and thus became the secondary cause of that carthy-haired monarch's demise. Then the New Forest reminds Aunt Fanny of Sherwood Forest and his outlaws, and she gives her *protégé*'s some interesting particulars respecting the life of Robin Hood and his outlaw associates. The work is illustrated by William Harvey, George Thomas, Birket Foster, and Harrison Weir.

THE ROYAL PUNCH AND JUDY SHOW (Dean and Son) is a collection of pictures representing the most striking scenes and situations from the popular drama of "Punch." The figures are cunningly contrived, so that the appearance of action can be given to them by moving a strip of card-board up and down; and the pictures are accompanied by the libretto of this original play. The only objection we have to this Punchinellian performance is, that it does not end happily for the hero. The true and original ending to "Punch" is this:—the demon enters, "Punch" fights him, overcomes him, slays him, and then triumphantly exclaims:—"Now we can do as we like." It isn't moral, but it is amusing; whereas the new conclusion, in which Diabolus gains the day, is very proper perhaps, but it is not funny, nor is it fair to our old friend.

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"Y for the youth, who, killed by a fall,
By a miracle wrought was recovered by Paul.
Z stands for Zoar, where Lot prayed to be;
It reminds me of Christ, a refuge for me."

Possibly this irreverent dogrel may find favour in the eyes of those who allow their children to play on Sundays with none but "sacred" toys (such as Noah's ark, for instance), but in our opinion it cannot be too strongly protested against.

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